



GARDINER CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET



Meeting Date		Department	
Agenda Item			
Est. Cost			
Background Information			
Requested Action			
City Manager and/or Finance Review			
Council Vote/ Action Taken			
Departmental Follow-Up			

City Clerk Use Only	1 st Reading _____	Advertised _____	EFFECTIVE DATE _____
	2 nd Reading _____	Advertised _____ w/in 15 Days	
	Final to Dept _____	Updated Book _____	Online _____

Memo to: Melissa Lindley, Economic Development
From: Parks and Public Spaces Committee
Subj: Dearborn Park Re-Design
Date: November 26, 2024

We met on Tuesday, November 26 to review the final plan documents for the Dearborn Park Project with Landscape Architect Tom Farmer.

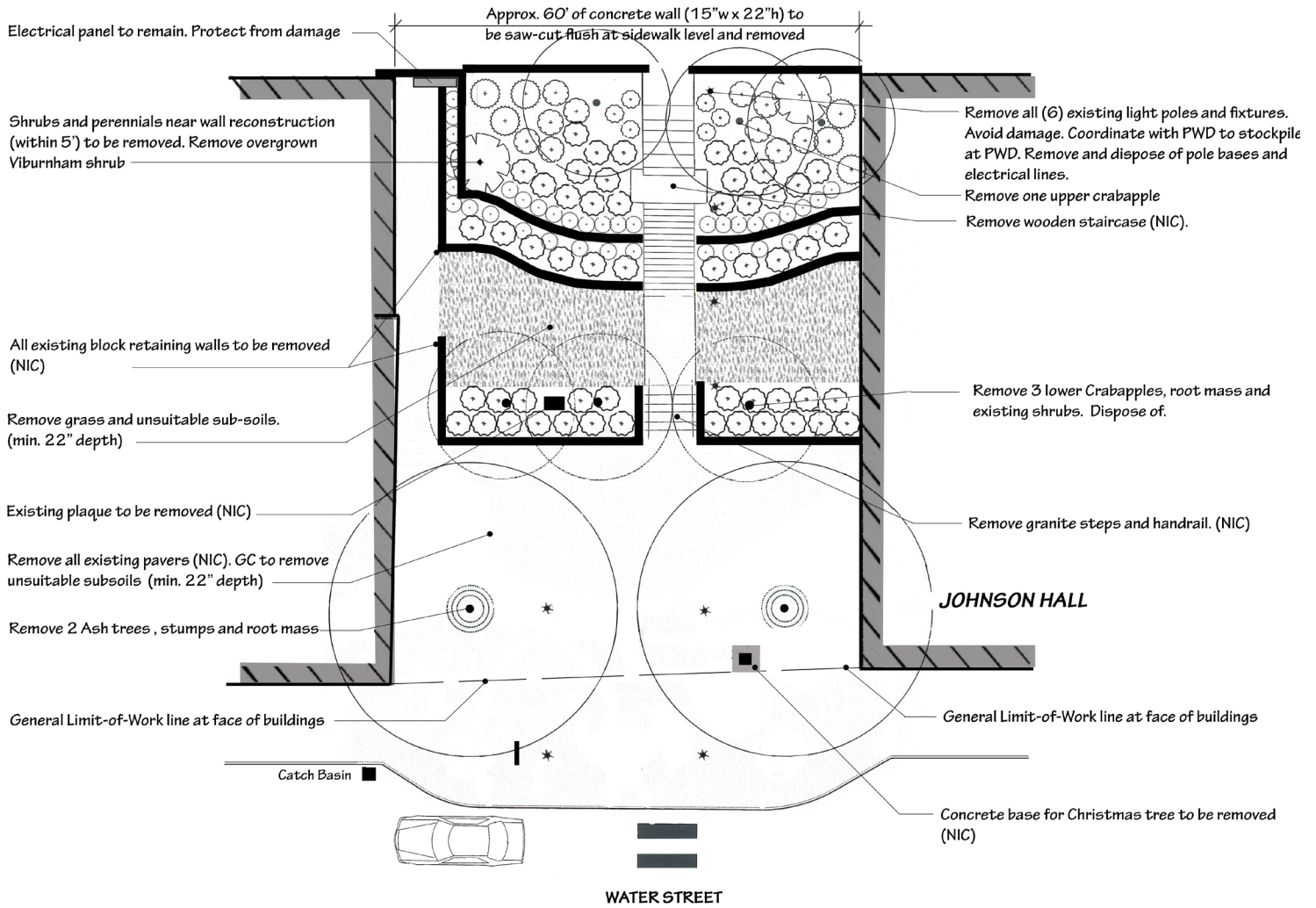
The committee considered the overall approach for the restoration of this park and came to general agreement on pertinent details as follows:

- New lighting to match that used in the recent Bridge Project
- Pruning and preservation of existing apple trees – upper level
- Replacement of the mid level crab apple trees with suitable species
- Removal of existing ash trees/lower level (*see below)
- Replacement of grass area with pavers/2nd level
- Add 2 or 3 permanent seating/table features similar to those in McKay Park/2nd level
- Removal of existing concrete wall adjacent to Mechanic St., replace with metal fence/black
- Removal of all old retaining walls, use of Verti-block split-rock face walls
- Improve drainage, all levels
- New stairs, thermal granite/lower, Timber Tech Pro/upper
- Addition of metal railings
- Additional electric service
- Add frost proof hydrant
- Install new pavers, first two levels – similar to those used in McKay
- Add 12V LED outdoor string lights
- Consider reconstruction of existing commemorative benches/additional seating for both Lower levels
- Remove and replant perennials and necessary shrubs, retain hydrangea
- Remove existing holiday tree stand and design alternative

The committee reached general agreement on the above items with some alternatives

*Issues needing more discussion:

- Losing the green canopy over the street and within the park
- Loss of established blooming trees and shade
- Pruning of overgrown limbs and their health/ice storm risk
- Construction impact to trees if they remain
- Life span of current mature trees vs. longer life of possible replacements
- Replanting with species more suitable for urban environment



A

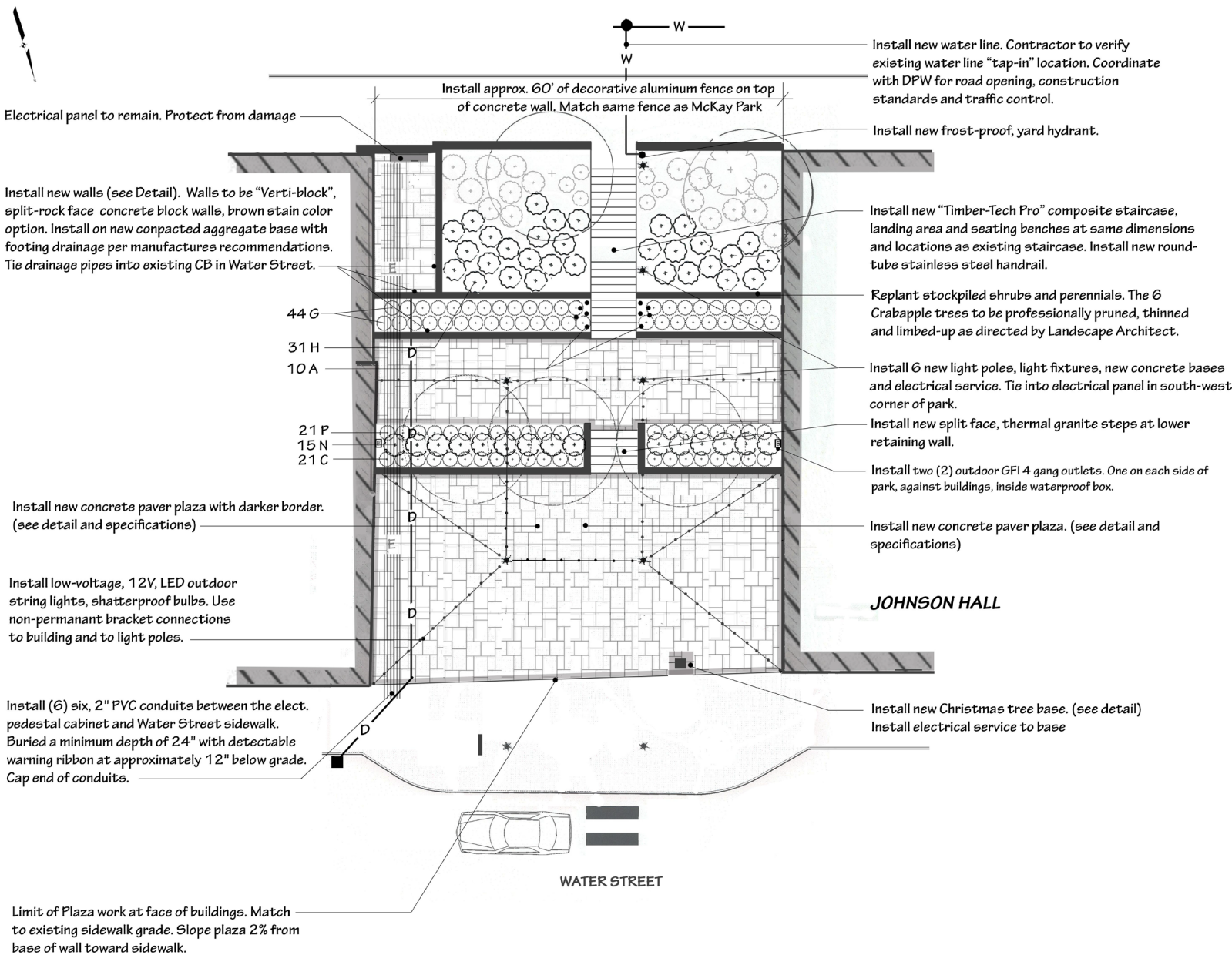
DEMOLITION PLAN

GRAPHIC SCALE: 1" = 10'

0' 10' 20' 30'

General Notes:

1. Prior to and throughout construction, enclose entire park with security fence to restrict public access. Secure and lock fenced areas following each day of work.
2. NIC is work that will be performed by the Public Works Department and not in the contract for the General Contractor. Do not bid on NIC work.



B

LAYOUT, UTILITIES AND PLANTING PLAN

GRAPHIC SCALE: 1" = 10'

0' 10' 20' 30'

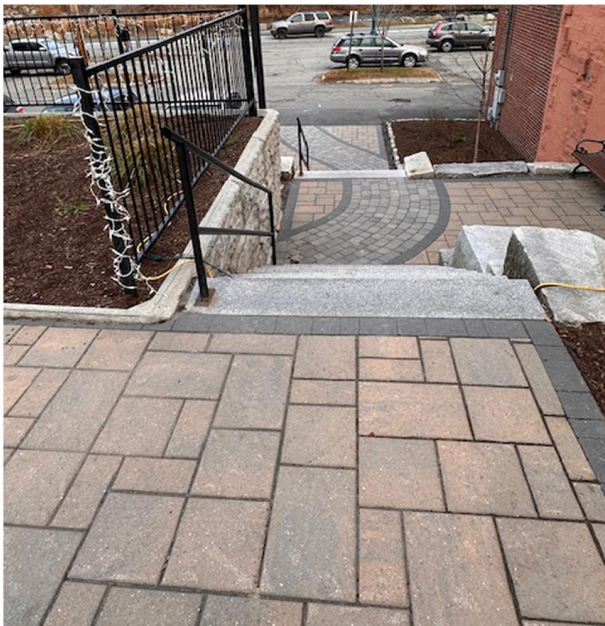
Plant Schedule

legend	quant.	size	botanical name	common name	notes/description
TREES					
Cc	3	2" cal	Carpinus betulus 'Frans Fontaine'	Frans Fontaine Hornbeam	narrow, columnar tree
SHRUBS & PERENNIALS					
A	10	18" - 24"	Allium	Globe Master	Plant 12" o.c. 6 week early summer bloom
C	21	2 yr pot	Coreopsis	Jethro Tull' bright yellow	plant 24" o.c. v. tolerant, blooms all summer
G	44	2 yr pot	Geranium macrorrhizum 'Ingerson's Variety'	Geranium (Cransbill)	Plant 24" o.c.
H	31	#3	Hydrangea	Arborescens 'Invincibelle Sprit'	plant 5' o.c. pink color
N	15	#3	Nepeta x faassenii 'Walker's Low'	Walker's Low Catmint	plant 24" o.c., v. tolerant, blooms all summer
P	21	#3	Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Little Bunny'	Little Buny Fountain Grass	plant 24" o.c.

No substitutions or size changes without approval of owner or LA
All plants guaranteed for a full year, following final approval
4" min. thick barkmulch beds.
Refer to planting details for proper excavation and backfill of plant root balls
All perennials to be planted in 18" min. depth of planting mix / loam



Retaining Wall Appearance



Paving Pattern and Colors



Granite Steps (between plazas),
Handrail & Fence



Lighting Poles and Fixtures



Permanent Tables



DEARBORN PARK RESTORATION PLANS PHOTO EXAMPLES

Tom Farmer, Landscape Architect
Nov. 26, 2024



Dearborn Park Public Feedback Survey Results

Online Survey: March 20-31, 2024

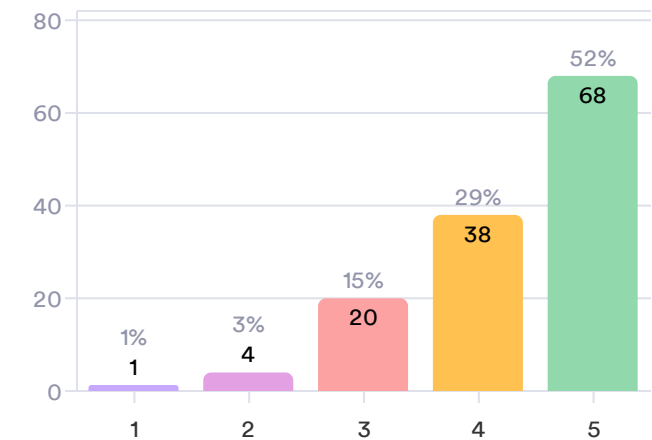
Dearborn Park Public Feedback

Rate which park features are most or least important to you:

1=Not Important 5=Very Important

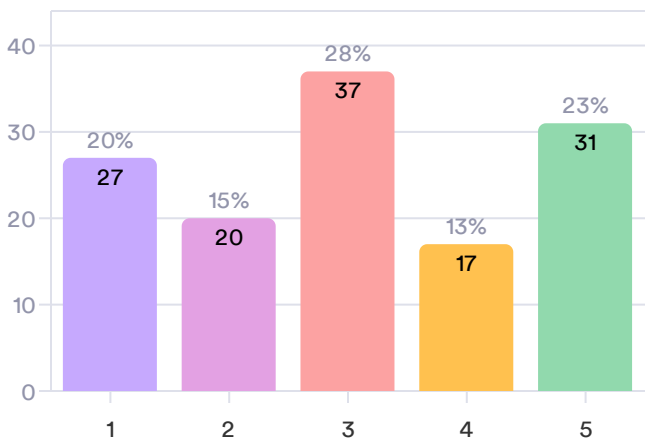
A place to sit

131 Responses- 2 Empty



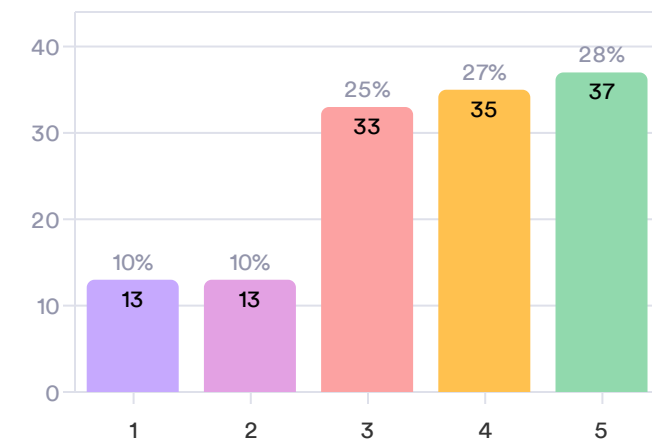
A place for children

132 Responses- 1 Empty



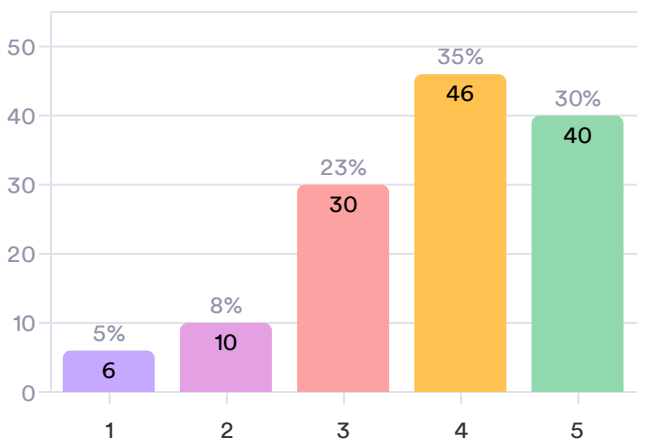
A place to enjoy a bite to eat

131 Responses- 2 Empty



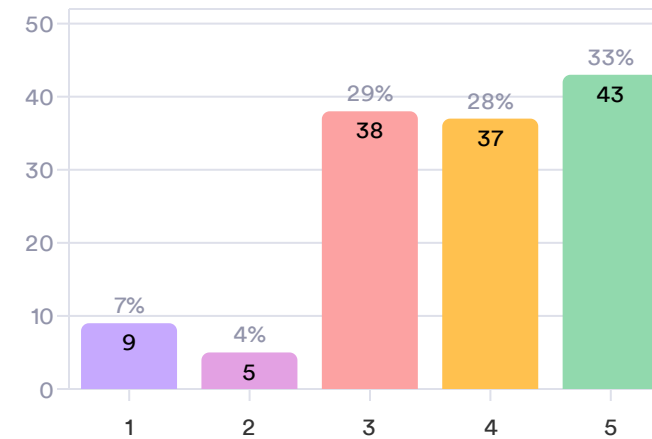
A place to meet family & friends

132 Responses- 1 Empty



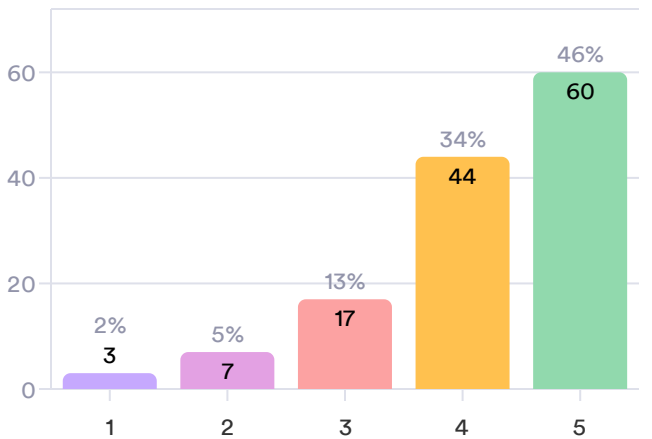
A place with shade

132 Responses- 1 Empty



A place to enjoy nature (trees, flowers, etc.)

131 Responses- 2 Empty



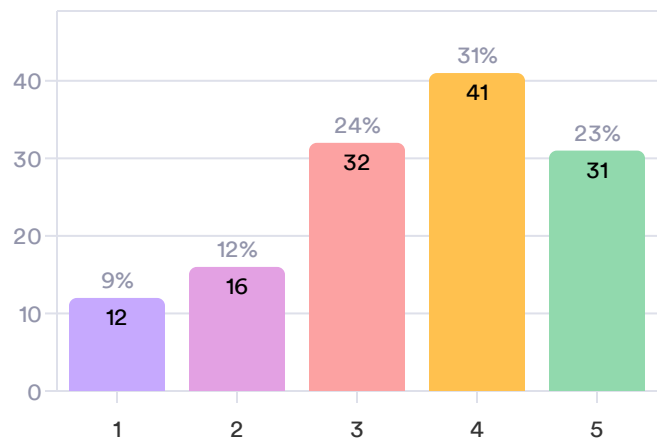
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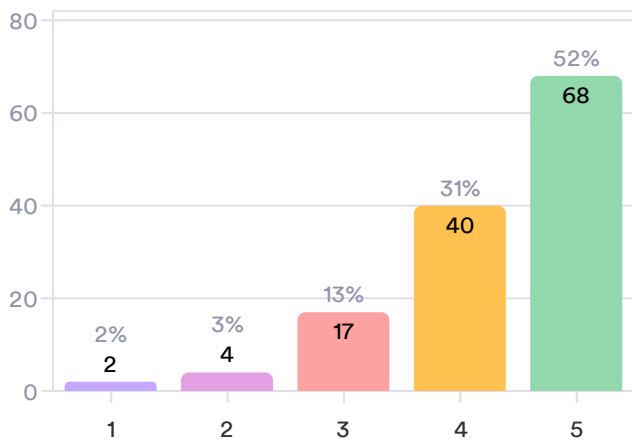
A place to enjoy public art

132 Responses- 1 Empty



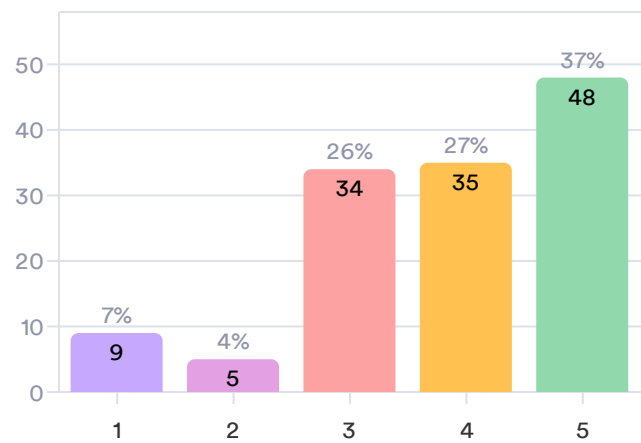
A well-lit place at night

131 Responses- 2 Empty



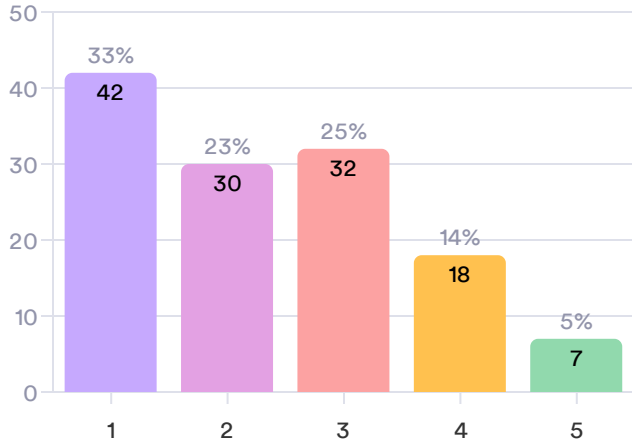
A place to hold community events

131 Responses- 2 Empty



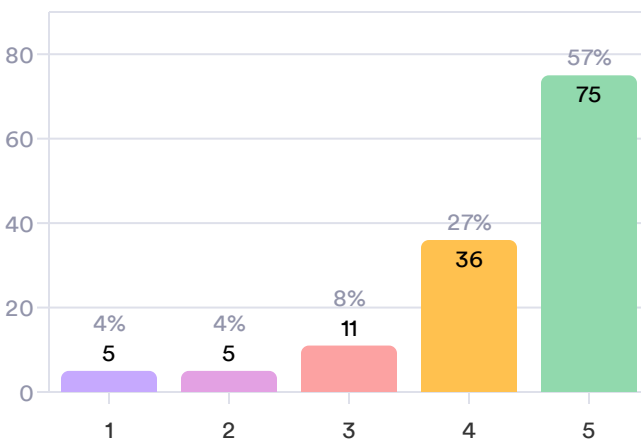
Bike racks/storage area

129 Responses- 4 Empty



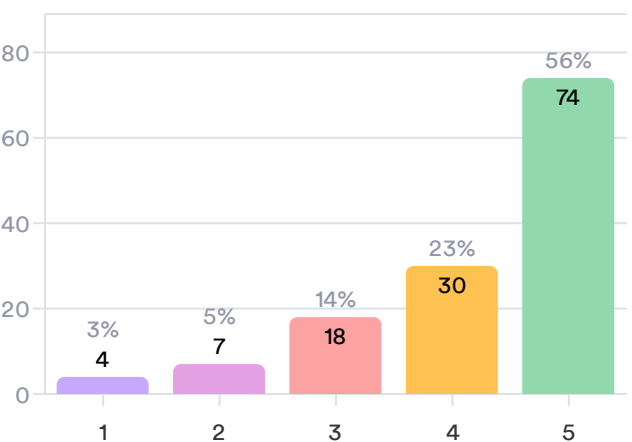
A place to enjoy holiday lights and the city Christmas tree

132 Responses- 1 Empty



Design that compliments the historic features of the downtown

133 Responses



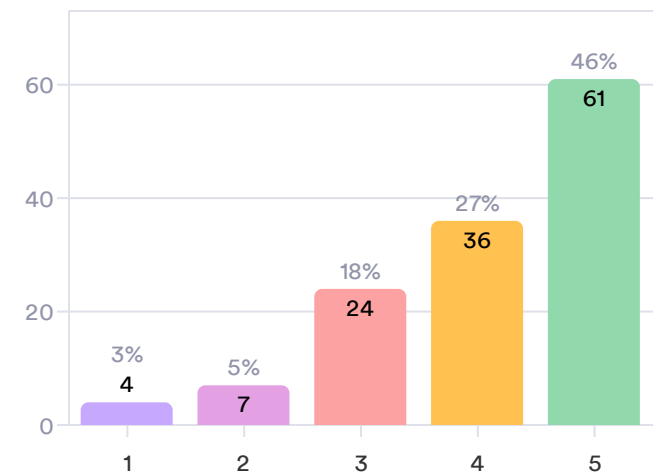
Dearborn Park Public Feedback

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1=Not Important 5=Very Important

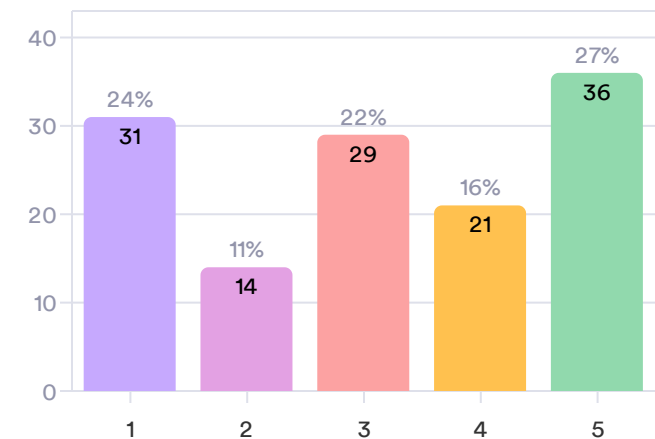
Stairway connecting Mechanic & Water Streets

132 Responses- 1 Empty



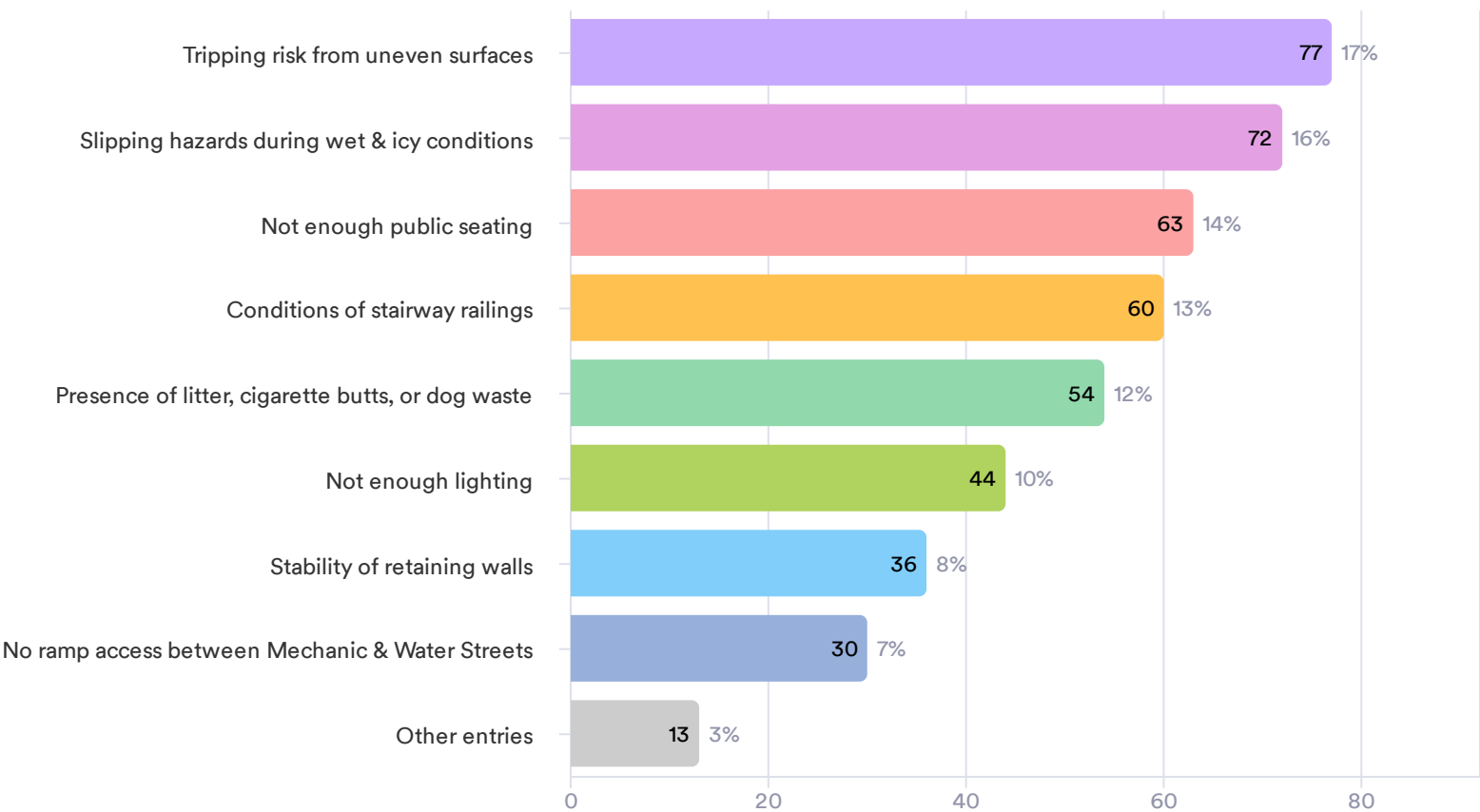
Handicap accessible ramp connecting Mechanic & Water Streets

131 Responses- 2 Empty



What are your concerns about the current conditions of the park? (Multiple Selection)

449 Responses- 12 Empty



Dearborn Park Public Feedback

What are your concerns about the current conditions of the park? (Multiple Selection)

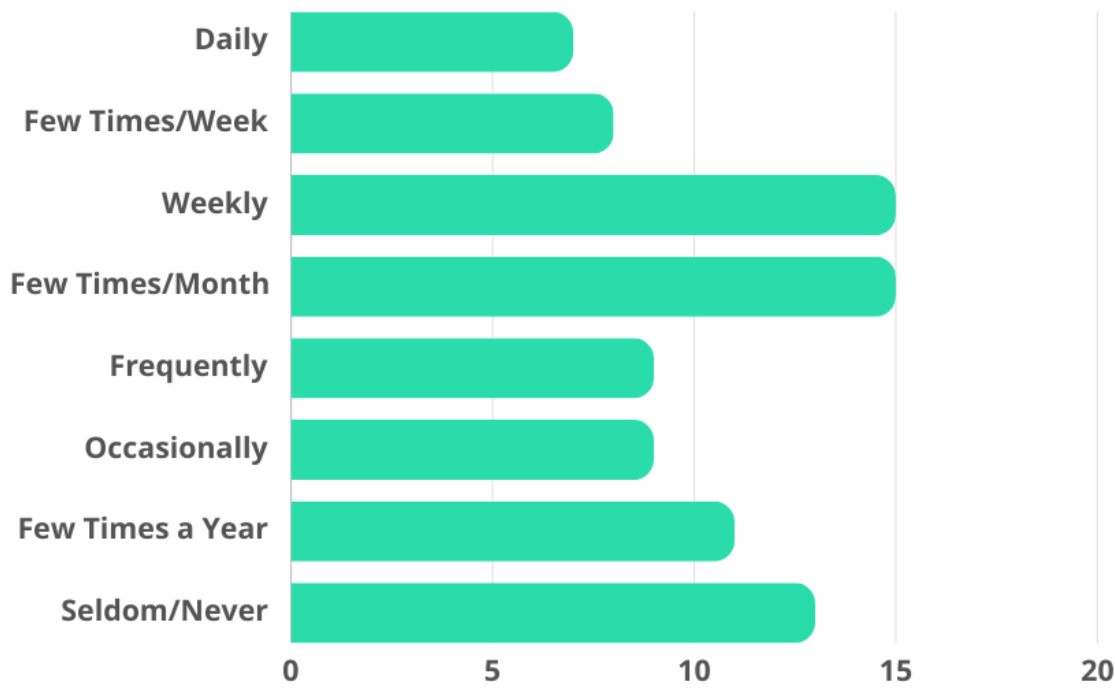
Other responses:

- That a private business has taken over half of the public park. This should not be happening.
- Should not be taken over by private business
- Esthetics of the park
- Stairs do not represent Gardiner well.
- The middle tier is underutilized space. The public park is half occupied by restaurant seating. The presence of litter can be managed by keeping public trash receptacles around down town
- You/encroachment by restaurant located on site
- Smoking and pot smoking.
- Space used for restaurant
- No reason to go there and sit or stand or hangout with those whose welfare I work to pay for
- A restaurant takes up half of the park, which I don't think is fair to park patrons.
- Wooden stairs themselves
- Lack of attraction for most of the year
- Too much of the area is dedicated to outside seating for The Blind Pig.
- Would be very difficult to get a ramp in this park and would likely take up the entire space. More important would be getting a ramp from the arcade lot with all of the parking to water street...

How often do you use/visit the park? (Open Ended Response)

92 Responses- 41 Empty

How Often Do You Visit The Park?



DEARBORN PARK PUBLIC SURVEY
OPEN EDNDED RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS:

What is your favorite feature of the park? (93 Responses, 40 Empty)

Trees & Nature

1. Love the spring apple blossoms, the view of downtown as you descend the stairs, the way the Christmas tree brings the community together.
2. The trees and blossoms
3. The apple trees blooming in the spring!!!! The hostas and other plantings in the park.
4. The gardens were beautiful- when they were maintained. Would like to see the gardens continue to grow and flourish.
5. the plants in season
6. Gardens
7. Gardens and trees
8. Blooming trees
9. Flowers
10. location, plants
11. The trees.
12. The garden, and the trees, and a place to sit in the shade when it is hot and sunny outside.
13. The flowering trees
14. The trees.
15. nature and place for children to play at times

Location

1. The location.
2. Location
3. An open air spot in the middle of downtown to gather.
4. It can be a beautiful peaceful spot to gather and enjoy downtown.
5. Location, historic features.
6. I love the connection that this area has to Johnson Hall.
7. its location in the town center and its function for holiday celebrations
8. Place to sit and watch Gardiner go by, plus easy access to restaurants and the theatre.
9. Location location location
10. Location
11. It's a great half way point on our frequent downtown walks (or scooter rides), and we love stopping here to watch the world go by while we take a break.
12. It's right between the iron Pig and Johnson Hall
13. Where it is on water street.
14. Connection from water st to mechanic st.
15. location downtown to sit
16. love having a little park with seating in the middle of downtown
17. That it's there.
18. Location

Design/Features:

1. the brick
2. Tiered design
3. The historic feel of it
4. The staircase, the overall look of the park.
5. Setting
6. The space is beautiful - please don't change it to something else:(
7. The trees and the brick
8. Benches and trees
9. It is a beautiful setting
10. Brick
11. The trees. And the wood stairs and railings
12. The quaint and rustic feel.
13. The open space and seating.
14. Brick floor
15. The openness.
16. The way that it has several levels, makes it easier for everyone to be able to see when community events are held there
17. The connecting stairs. I used to love the bag lunch performances Johnson Hall sponsored there years ago.
18. It's historic aesthetic, trees.
19. Shade and benches
20. Benches to meet friends
21. The seating, the trees in the fall.
22. That it is a gathering place with seating and a bit of nature
23. The historic lighting and the potential for flower beds and benches.

Function/Usage:

1. Love that it is used by city for gathering events. Would love see more performance art.
2. When the restaurant does not have half the park blocked off
3. Christmas Tree lights. Outdoor music groups
4. outdoor dining
5. I like when the Blind Pig had tables set out so people could eat there. People enjoy eating outside and we should have more areas like that.
6. Enjoying having food and a drink there
7. It is a nice place to sit outside if we eat at Blind Pig
8. I love the location and it is a very beautiful park. However, when it becomes a dining room for the local restaurant, people don't go in the park much. It also has a very dingy, dirty look. It needs to be swept frequently and cleaned often. Same as with all other parks that connect water street with back parking lot. Real dingy and dirty looking, not maintained well at all.
9. I love that it is a place to eat dinner while at Blind Pig.
10. Nice place to dine outside.
11. Place to sit.

12. Nice space with possibilities.
13. A bit of respite for downtown
14. "Love that it is lively, well used public space. Love the multiple community events. Hope for even more now that JHall is fully operational. I love the flowering trees."
15. Community gathering spot
16. Lights at Christmas, a unique spot downtown to eat outdoors
17. Holiday lighting, plein air dining, trees in the fall
18. N/A
19. I enjoy the park experience as a whole. The park provides a both a welcoming access to downtown Gardiner and a refreshing natural and historic space in which to rest or to gather in community with other people. The sounds and events of the park are inviting, uplifting, and energizing as well - people in conversation, laughter, birds, music, and more.
20. When it is used for the Christmas Tree Lighting and holiday decorations.
21. The resting place for people walking to shops. Looking at the surroundings.
22. Going there to sit w friends and family
23. It's in the center of town, close to several eateries. Nice place to sit and read, it's a cozy little spot. Love the brick or cobblestone walk way.
24. The space for the Christmas tree, and the space to accommodate the crowd that comes to see the tree lighting, are equally my favorite feature of this park.
25. During the day when it's sunny, it's a cute little area on Water Street to take a break and of course the access down to the arcade parking lot
26. Community space within downtown. Cozy feel.
27. Available space for acoustic jams and music gettogethers
28. wonderful shady green spot for sitting
29. Shady spot to eat
30. The trees and flowers providing pleasant surroundings, ability to have public events tree-lighting, dance and music occasionally, a place to sit and watch the world go by.
31. The holiday lights and christmas tree during the holidays.
32. It's quaint and serves a functional use in the middle of Water St. businesses such as eateries.
33. The park is a peaceful refuge and place to rest while shopping. It also gives you a chance to stop and look at our beautiful downtown.
34. The current location of the park is essential. If you allow Blind Pig to have outside dining in the park you should charge for a seasonal license and only when proper fencing with flower boxes. Allowing plastic chains on cheap holders does not cut it for our appearance
35. The Christmas tree during the holiday season
36. The central location to downtown and the ability to sit and enjoy the social aspect of downtown.

What do you dislike about the park? (87 Responses, 46 Empty)

1. Johnson Hall has their trash cans in the park now that they are reopen.
2. Uneven pavement, the presence of ugly orange cones and an orange barrel, the over use by the restaurant in terms of space, the disappearance of the benches.
3. I don't think the space is being used to its full potential.
4. nothing
5. Wooden steps are hard to maintain
6. "I dislike that the restaurant occupies a public space that limits/excludes residents to the area unless you pay to eat there. It's intimidating and takes away the park experience. Public is public"
7. Not a place to connect
8. That the bar and restaurant has taken over half of the public park.
9. Watching young grand children navigate the space with their normal enthusiasm. (worried about falling)
10. Restaurant taking up shared city space.
11. The uneven walking surface, lack of handicap access from Mechanic St.
12. Small
13. The stairs are treacherous! The railings are in such poor shape you get splinters trying to hang on to them.
14. I think the Blind Pig monopolizes most of the space so unless you're a patron, there isn't much space to sit, read, eat something from one of the other downtown places or your own meal. I think people visiting from away to attend a show at Johnson Hall would enjoy having space to get fresh air before, during and after the show.
15. The uneven pavement. Tables are very tipping when eating outside Blind Pig.
16. "Only half the park is public. People smoking in the park"
17. Maintenance and drabness of the design and lack of simply "beauty" .
18. the condition of the stairs in inclement weather
19. Few plants—would love more!
20. If it's the space I am thinking of, I feel like I have to be a patron of The Blind Pig in order to sit there.
21. Small
22. Slippery and uneven
23. I guess I don't really think of it as a park. The Common is a park.
24. It seems to be only a space for The Blind Pig. That's how we think of it. I don't see it as a public space for when it's warm out
25. Doesn't look inviting
26. There isn't really anything that attracts you to the park.
27. Its not well used and its not well cared for. In the Summertime, its mostly used for Blind Pig, which takes up most of the space and makes me feel like I'm intruding on gatherings/meals if we're at the park.
28. The Blind Pig takes up too much space in the summer
29. Dog waste and cigarette butts.
30. Seems like a lot of the space is currently unused - the vertical garden bed area seems like largely wasted space.

31. Stairs need to be maintained, improved.
32. The Pig is taking over all the public space. It has become privatized and no longer inviting to the public.
33. More attention to the brickwork. Occasional cleaning with a grit and long handle broom to remove any slippery substance.
34. Broken benches
35. The lack of seating and the stairs are on their way out.
36. Doesn't seem to get utilized as much as should with seating for gazing or eating at local places
37. Seems to always be dirty, not well designed, seems run down.
38. No seating for when there is no community event.
39. Kind of grim
40. Tree roots damaging brickwork
41. There is limited space and functionality.
42. Just blah
43. I am not sure I like the pub next door using public space for eating except it creates a friendly ambiance. Do they pay for maintenance and upkeep of the area?
44. The wooden stairs
45. Private business takes up a large portion of the park during peak use times.
46. That The Blind Pig has outdoor seating in it. It's the city's park for people to enjoy. Not the Blind Pig's. It gets obnoxious when people are out there drinking and the outdoor karaoke is horrendous. It's so loud at night for residents and merchants when their customers are out there. It should be a park for the people of Gardiner.
47. The unuseable, tiered levels.
48. The park could use renewal and updating.
49. How much of the plaza is taken up by patrons of The Pig. Walls on right side and both stairways need to be redone as they are hazards.
50. Businesses take it over
51. Uneven surfaces, safety issues with the steps and railing, and lack of public seating.
52. Stairs in icy conditions
53. Not a very welcoming space if you aren't going to the restaurant
54. it is in disrepair
55. Restaurant encroaches
56. Too little seating and no small tables for public use flowers fresh paint more lighting
57. Unusable while restaurant is using it and the smoke, you can't be there if you want fresh air.
58. could probably use better lighting
59. The lack of handicap accessibility in Gardiner from Mechanic and arcade lot!
60. Nothing really if we can clean it up fix the walkway.
61. The crumbling retaining walls and lack of public tables
62. My only major issue with the park right now is the fact that the wooden steps get very slippery in the rain.
63. The stairs and the railing. There must be a way to make the stairs safer.
64. ? safety
65. Nothing

66. The smokers and the restaurant using the space
67. The same as the stores... lack of parking, and no plan
68. uneven bricks and lack of respect with cigarette waste
69. adjoining restaurant taking over park for outdoor seating for dining
70. Walls are sketchy
71. I dislike very much that the Blind Pig (or whatever restaurant is there) taking over much of the park-- actually any part of the park. It's one thing to have a place for the public to eat to-go food or packed lunches (which I support), but having full restaurant service and exclusive use of a portion of the park with their tables and chairs always there until winter is what I don't like.
72. I wish there was nicer landscaping, because if there was I would enjoy sitting on the benches there to read.
73. Not enough parking availability during large events such as the tree lighting.
74. I would like to see the stairs kept in better shape and look. And the gardens have not always been taken care of well. Now if could just get people to stop throwing out trash and letting their dogs go wherever, that would be nice.
75. Half of the park was taken up by a restaurant during the pleasant part of the year. I'm not anti-restaurant, but the park should be for citizens to enjoy.
76. Nothing.
77. Not kept clean and the stairs need attention possibly redo with Trex type decking material. The walkway is uneven and also needs attention
78. Steps
79. Lack of attraction during most of the year.
80. Just general upkeep, perhaps the stairs are a bit steep.
81. Needs to be more attractive and appealing so it can be a center piece for downtown. Also needs to be more accessible for all
82. The empty tree spots, lack of benches, and the condition of the stairs.
83. The fact that The Blind Pig has commandeered much of the space for their own purposes. If they want to use the space, they should rent it from the town.
84. The stairs are ugly and hard to maintain.
85. Why does the a private restaurant take up half the space of the park
86. Wish it was a better place to gather for everyone not just the blind pig patrons
87. I support the use as outdoor dining does help create an urban feel for the downtown, but the Blind Pig takes up too much of the park. Maybe half of what they have would be acceptable. The rest of the "public" park doesn't feel welcoming for non-customers. Can they use the sidewalk in front of the business to add more outdoor tables so that not as much is used at the park? For long term seasonal use, a business should pay a fee that supports the maintenance of the park.

Do you have ideas for improvements to the park? (81 Responses, 52 Empty)

1. Stairs, pavers, access, new/refurbished benches, more activities, a public meeting space.
2. Separate from the waterfront concerts, it would be cool to have a small stage or space for smaller scale performers. Perhaps connected to JH or Indie Stage.
3. picnic tables might be a nice addition! a small children's play gym? a slide going from Mechanic St to Water St? an urban playground if you will
4. Flowering trees?
5. All mentioned in this survey
6. Community art
7. Remove the restaurants roped off area
8. Mural pertinent to Gardiner history, photo op for visitors, a statue or fountain, better no fuss landscaping, reclaim the space from the restaurant, ramp to make our city more Ada compliant, seating, designated spot for Christmas tree, art installations- a place to just relax, picnic, and enjoy downtown.
9. A ramp, more inclusivity. Maybe have a disabled person on the committee.
10. Park is small. City should consider turning into natural plant/flower area. Plant native plants and let it overgrow.
11. Plants brighter with lights
12. More seating, better lighting.
13. Mural on wall depicting Gardiner . Flowers in summer. Level pavement. Well lit stairs at night
14. Competitive bidding emphasizing beauty, as well as Universal Design.
15. Would love to see it gardened. I'd be willing to help with that!
16. leave it as is
17. Encourage local businesses to expand the "cafe culture" of downtown with outdoor seating.
18. Keep as is. Beautiful as is. It's a spot in Gardiner we enjoy as it isn't commercialized or catered to one group - it's enjoyable for everyone
19. Public art, street performers and free public seating would be great.
20. More benches, seating, greenery, plants
21. I enjoy its current character that it adds to the town
22. Make it a pot free zone. The smells are terrible. Make it more generic to the public than seen as a restaurant only space.
23. some better colors in the park
24. A mural might be nice?
25. Add some low-maintenance flowers/shrubs, create space for seating, I'd love to see something for my child to play with downtown- but I'm not sure what that looks like.
26. No i think it's a really attractive centerpiece of the downtown.
27. Would love to see string lights, outdoor furniture, plants.
28. More seating
29. Would be great if the vertical garden beds were converted to amphitheater-style seating. This could be a place for people to sit and relax, and also could be used for audiences when there are community events or performances. Camden's park next to their public library does this beautifully.
30. Maintain and improve stairs.

31. Remove the grass- won't grow there. Replace with hard scape. Retaining walls are in need of repair. Stairs are desperately in need of replacement- consider winding ramp from Mechanic Street to Water Street- handicap accessible.
32. A fountain
33. Invest in infrastructure
34. More seating would be great. I'd love to see more diverse and native landscaping too
35. Seating with revolving arts and/or light themes
36. A mural on the JHall wall?
37. Flowering bushes would be nice.
38. Picnic tables
39. Use natural stone for retaining wall
40. Maybe some outside performances by Johnson Hall in the spring and fall. More seating places to meet neighbors and tables to work on. Free WiFi, various cart vendors
41. It should be a quiet place where people can sit and enjoy. needs to be lit with appropriate night lighting. Flowers, and no trash cans.
42. N/A
43. I love the shade and retaining wall portion. Maybe a layered look would help with any concerns of it falling down. Tables like at McKay Park would be great too.
44. Keep the tiers but make each one, or at least the second level, a seating area in a patio area with a rail that is similar the nearby design in front of A1 (but more visually open.)
45. The park certainly is a design, engineering, and city planning challenge! I hope that professionals in these fields might be able to contribute to the renewal of the park.
46. Relay the plaza cobblestones and provide more welcoming sitting for non-Pig visitors. Fix the staircases. Lights? Fix the right hand walls. Redo the grass with better soil, shade tolerant grass. Open up the tree canopy and KEEP THE DOGS OUT. Posters about who Dearborn was and the hotel that used to be there.
47. Seating
48. I'll leave that to the professionals.
49. Similar layout to the newly renovated park over by niche!
50. Tree for shade and perennial flowers.
51. Better layout
52. Terraced seating/green areas above the brick floor
53. Wood flower pots party lights.
54. Smokeless seating on even ground that is handicapped friendly and welcoming to all.
55. more benches and small tables perhaps
56. Flowers
57. Some sort of awning?
58. some nice plants and few hanging basket with flowers

59. A mural would be nice, love seeing the murals in Augusta's water street business area and it would be nice to see similar in Gardiner. Add different wings for photo taking, similar to the butterfly wings that were by the library.
60. If we install good quality anti-slip treads to the wooden steps, and repaint the steps so they look better, the safety and appearance of the park would be improved substantially. I could be mistaken, as a lot of things are expensive nowadays, but I think this could be done relatively cheaply by maintenance.
61. I recently had to pass through the park to attend an event at Johnson Hall, and it was very dark and rainy, and I was concerned about visibility
62. Police keeping smokers away and the restaurant not using space. More plantings and maybe even the bag lunch events coming back.
63. The stairs and railings need to be made a lot sturdier and safer, especially in the Winter. It would be the main walkway to Johnson Hall for anyone parking above Water St, and you can easily have one or two hundred people using those stairs at the same time.
64. Better seating. More public art and plantings. Outdoor soreness for music.
65. Plan based on the survey, and incorporate some technology, and think about some golf cart-like shuttles to transport people from the waterfront parking to the park
66. Ramps are better than stairs
67. Safer feeling stairs and better paint job if you stick with wood.
68. If feasible, to level the terraced sections and provide little places to sit with tables not just picnic tables. Bistro type.
69. The stairs and railings need to be kept up. As a person with mobility issues, that is truly important to me. A handicap ramp is wonderful for access but I think would ruin the look of this adorable part. The bricks should be maintained better as they should on the entire sidewalk as I have fallen twice in Gardiner and both times, I tripped on a brick.
70. I would love to see a fountain feature, perhaps the garden retaining walls could also function as seating (18 to 19 inches high). The stairs are a bit scary during ice and snow conditions. Proper sub-bed for under the bricks would keep the sidewalks from frost heaving. A couple of picnic tables available for picnicking families would be nice - much like the park leading down to the Arcade parking lot, next to Niche.
71. Keep it maintained.
72. Many cities do not allow outdoor dining unless the restaurant uses proper fencing with flower boxes. Not wood sticks in buckets with rope or plastic chains with cheap holders.
73. I think right now it mostly looks like an empty, unused area, but it could be a really cute spot that encourages people to spend more time downtown. I'd love to see something visually interesting (Historic Gardiner themed mural/sculpture/outdoor art exhibit, flower garden, etc) to draw people in and more space for people to sit and enjoy that area. It is nestled right into some very cool old buildings and could be a great way to encourage people to spend more time in our beautiful downtown if it is more visually appealing
74. I might suggest stairs that stop at several landings instead of one large set of stairs. This would make climbing them easier for those who struggle with stairs and give them a break to stop on the way up. In my opinion this is a better option than a ramp. While a ramp would be great, it would take up most of the space in that park to do to code and would be very costly. I would prefer to see costs going toward other improvements. In my opinion

there would be more value having a ramp from Arcade to Water Street than from Mechanic Street to Water Street. Preserving some green space in the middle of Water Street would be a priority for me.

75. Needs more plants, trees and benches.

76. Gardens, benches, trash, painting/finishing steps. And for the entrance at the top of the park, on the street to be inviting and purposeful.

77. I think some nice tables for public use would be great. It also might be nice to have a water bottle filling station.

78. Better stairs, nice seating, plenty of shade.

79. More tables, benches

80. I wish that there were places on water street to throw away butts. At the top of the stairs would be a great place for this. More seating, would like for there to be more, maybe picnic benches or seating on the bricks and the first level where there is grass. Could even put wood chips there since the grass is gross anyways

81. The off center placement of the stairs is odd.

Anything else you would like to share? (46 Responses, 87 Empty)

1. some art would be a nice addition! maybe rotating?
2. I love the outdoor seating for the Blind Pig. Sometimes I go there over other restaurants in the area because of it.
3. I love the small pocket parks in downtown
4. The backlash is not worth it to identify myself.
5. Thanks for asking!!
6. I didn't enjoy the changes made to the pocket park across from Goldfinch, they don't seem to fit the neighborhood. I hope this one stays as much like its current iteration as possible.
7. In terms of development for our downtown, please recruit a variety of businesses. We do not need any more cannabis shops. For this park, it would be nice to have public use benches and good stairs
8. I was very disappointed with the tree lighting this past year. I understand you may not have the financial resources for more lights but did you think about asking people in the town to donate money for lights to help? I would be willing to contribute for sure. It was kind of lame to do the countdown and the tree barely lit up.
9. Irrelevant to the Dearborn Park project, but the play structure at the park is too tall and too un-contained for toddlers. The platform is over 10 feet tall with the wood chips thinned out. It's something that I hear often from other parents when I am there.
10. The benches that were made specifically for the city of Gardiner need to be restored and returned to the park. I don't know of any other small city that had such classic benches made just for the city. Of the original 8 eight ft. benches, I think 4 could be restored and returned to the park. They should be left in the park spring, summer, fall and winter.
11. Keep its historic feel and ambiance.
12. Keep the park a public park- not extra space for a private restaurant.
13. It's a beautiful park and I don't think much needs to change, maybe just a lil touch up. Thank you very much
14. Love the Christmas holiday, maybe plant a live balsam tree
15. Thank you for taking on this task.
16. It would be nice to have a bike ra at the top but not where its real obvious- perhaps mechanic street on the side behind a flowering bush so you cant see it from the bottom of the park.
17. Good to get several designs from different architects
18. This park has an important role as a gathering, spot and transition zone for various activities and flow in the middle of historic block. I also like how it breaks up the block as a pocket park. I believe it is completely acceptable and encouraged to have an agreement with the restaurant, as I believe this not only helps the business community, however, it also adds to the vibrancy and feeling downtown. While I appreciate the need for accessibility, in my opinion, it would take up way too much space to try and fit a handicap ramp there. Handicap access is most important by ensuring there are marked spots on water Street and a clear accessible path from the giant parking lot on the stream side. Please do not try and do fake historic in the space. I believe that a pocket park with modern lighting, public art, design, enhances, and helps the historic buildings adjacent stand out on their own, if we try to blend in fake history, we end up looking like a bad version of Disneyland.

19. N/A
20. I thought about whether the stairway could be removed, but then realized that pedestrians who travel down the hill might need to take more time and effort to reach Water Street. However, Mechanic Street behind the park seems to function mainly for service, parking, building access, and housing and is not a primary Gardiner attraction. Security in the park and easy access by emergency professionals are also important concerns. Regarding possible murals on the brick walls, these would need careful design and choice of colors in order not to detract from the park's beauty and simplicity.
21. Needs to be the centerpiece of the city, not a neglected mess. Must have paid personnel taking care of it with appropriate equipment, not volunteers with hand tools.
22. The sidewalks are of greater concern. They are a hazard to downtown businesses, and should be tackled first.
23. N/A
24. No
25. I missed going there to sit
26. Can the rent fees charged to the restaurant be used to make improvements to the park or will they no longer take up the park?
27. the big, deep hole, by the Mechanic Street sidewalk at one point was not covered by a cone or barrel, hopefully it's fixed, same as the Gardiner Common and it's surrounding corner. Fell in a deep hole in the Common.
28. Plant a permanent tree for holiday decorations so such beautiful trees don't have to be cut yearly
29. Where did the Name Dearborn for the park come from. Just curious as my married name is Dearborn.
30. I like the prospect of installing a ramp for disability access, but I am concerned that a properly graded ramp, with proper width, meeting ADA standards, might take up a very large footprint. The elevation change is fairly substantial. I have to wonder if the green space and plaza will both survive implementation of such a ramp. Would installation of a ramp steeper than ADA requirements, but less steep than other sidewalks disabled persons may have been likely to use on their way to reaching the park, be a viable option to allow all desired features to coexist?
31. Thank you for improving the park.
32. I think it's critically important that the park remains so there's access from the parking to water Street
33. I do think dogs should be allowed, and a poop bag dispenser and disposing receptacle available.
34. Plan, invite food trucks, utilize Johnson Hall for music, theater, comedy and spoken word events, bar-b-q and baking and sandwich and chowder cooking contests/events, or farmers market, small packaged brewfest...
35. The downtown as a whole needs more parking. It seems the parking area on the left of the library could be redone and possibly extended to accommodate more vehicles. Is the parking garage only for bank employees? Could there be a section open to the public such as when the bank is closed? Also the bank parking lot on Mechanic St. It seems it is not completely full with vehicles during the day. Could part of that be used by the public? AND

the small parking lot next to the Post Office often has vehicles parked there when there isn't any patrons inside the post office lobby. It doesn't appear that law enforcement truly watches that. Even postal employees park there.

36. Of all the years I have been involved with Gardiner, I wasn't aware that the name of that park is Dearborn park. That happens to be my maiden name but none of my family comes from this area.
37. Perhaps the stairs could be set up in a curve as it descends - it's such a straight shot, it kind of looks like it will propel a person forward if they lose their footing. Or maybe it could have a switchback, via several landings with a ramp to one side? Or perhaps it should be a serpentine-like ramp, not stairs, useable by wheelchairs and feet.
38. No.
39. I am glad you are seeking input and hope action is taken. Possibly offer corporate/individual sponsorships - naming rights for the proper donation such as naming the stairway / a park bench / the park itself - this is how other cities were able to afford improvements
40. Good survey questions. Thanks.
41. While it would be nice to accommodate everything for everyone, I would encourage those making the decisions to be careful not to do mediocre or poor jobs at everything instead of excelling at a few things. If you're going to do a ramp just do a ramp and give up on the gardens or trees or Christmas tree or something. If you're going to have beautiful flower beds and lots of seating, then you may not be able to build a ramp. Unfortunately that space is limited in size and I think it would be a mistake to try to cram too many things into it.
42. Love the idea of outdoor seating for The Blind Pig, but is that legal? It takes up a great deal of public space.
43. I do not think the public park space should be used by private businesses. It would be great to allow the space to be used freely.
44. The amount of space used by the restaurant means there is less space available for other uses.
45. Benches and table for all, not for a restaurant
46. Since it is the center of the downtown, it could be a good location for an informational kiosk for visitors (parking, business directory) or residents (community board).