



SHORELINE SIGNALS RFP
POLK COUNTY,
GREAT OUTDOORS FOUNDATION,
& BRAVO GREATER DES MOINES

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SUMMARY

Shoreline Signals will integrate public art with creek and river access points as a key feature of the Central Iowa Water Trails (CIWT) initiative which connects 150 miles of waterways with 86 points of access for fishing, wading in the water, paddling and pleasure.

CIWT is connecting residents and visitors of Greater Des Moines to the quality and potential of its water, enhancing our cultural community and serving as a catalyst for economic development and tourism. Three highly qualified artists will be paid to develop concepts that act both as invitations to the water's edge and as interpretive tools to help users—regardless of skill or language—understand the river's ecology and current state. Successful proposals will educate users on water safety and quality, visually connect the waterways, and signal when to engage the rivers.

PROJECT AT A GLANCE

- Three artists selected Nov 2020
- Site visits Dec/Jan 2020
- Proposals due 2/28/21
- Proposals paid at \$5,000
- Site visit travel paid at \$1,500
- Artist fees and design rights \$25,500
- Fabrication budget \$75,000 for up to three installed prototypes
- Project completion date in 2022
- Total project budget includes professional consultations, insurance, and other expenses

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Demonstrated ability & references from successfully completed project with a budget of at least \$125,000
- Ability to work with a large team including professionals such as naturalists and engineers
- History of work that is highly visually compelling
- Demonstrated ability to engage diverse communities and reflect their needs
- Demonstrated ability to use art as a problem-solving tool with novel and beautiful outcomes

PROUD TO BE SUPPORTED BY

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS

arts.gov

Three artists will develop proposals for Shoreline Signals—dynamic art installations integrated with water access points. They will help users interpret real-time changes in a stream, learn how to “read” the river and gauge their own risk when entering the water.

The Great Outdoors Foundation oversees Central Iowa Watertrails (CIWT), and Shoreline Signals is supported by Polk County and Bravo Greater Des Moines. The Shoreline Signals proposal process and project execution is managed by Group Creative Services.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Shoreline Signals will be the educational tool re-connecting central Iowa to its streams while deepening understanding of them. While the CIWT has robust engineering and landscape design plans to create or enhance 86 sites along 150 of central Iowa’s creeks and rivers, citizens’ number one concern is that they don’t know when it is safe to dip their toe in the water. Access points for fishing, paddling, or wading in the water needs to be coupled with a means for any citizen, regardless of experience or language, to begin to understand the dynamic nature of rivers.

Shoreline Signals is one of Iowa’s first regional public art projects and certainly its most ambitious. Local jurisdictions will be responsible for paying for and installing future installations at their river access points. Although prototypes may be more expensive due to problem solving and scale of manufacture, the final result must be attractive to individual municipalities as a cost effective and useful amenity. It is through adoption by partner communities and installation of Shoreline Signals that the project will find region-wide connection and impact.

Shoreline Signals should be a scalable solution that fits the budget and needs of different communities. It may best be realized as a ‘base model’ with optional features. Those features may offer

- **site specific engagement (either highlighting unique features of the site, using anecdotal knowledge about flows, or activating cultural community assets**
- **enhanced data visualization**
- **enhanced visual or sculptural features**
- **modes for municipalities to create distinction within Shoreline Signals aesthetic/system**

PROBLEM STATEMENT

THE SHORELINE SIGNALS PROJECT MUST ACCOMPLISH TWO GOALS

Years of community engagement show residents want and need amenities and infrastructure to offer equitable access to natural features and to safely engage in paddling, angling, wading and other water-based activities.

By providing a key educational overlay to recreation experiences, Shoreline Signals will improve the quality of life of Central Iowans, increase usage and safety and strengthen communities while driving tourism and economic development along the waterways. Inviting people to spend time with rivers will transform our view of water resources and serve as a catalyst to investments improving water quality and flood resiliency. It will remind Greater Des Moines and Polk County that we are a river town, founded at the confluence of the Raccoon and Des Moines rivers. The Greater Des Moines Water Trails and Greenways Master Plan provides a road-map to enhance residents' experiences in and along regional waterways.

- Beckon people to the water's edge and let them feel welcome.
- Communicate relative safety of river use at that location at that point in time.

PRIMARY SAFETY INDICATOR

Each access point has a unique range of flow (cfs) that is safe for most users. This information, along with access to real-time USGS flows, will be provided.

WATER QUALITY INDICATORS

Healthy ecosystems featuring *rich biodiversity* indicate higher quality water. Indicator species include "charismatic bugs" such as dragonflies and mayflies, as well as crayfish, frogs, salamanders, and painted turtles.

Real-time data available at some sites for artists to include as add-on features for Shoreline Signals proposals include

- **Nitrates**
- **Turbidity**

Water level relative to user's experience—and therefore safety—shown against a boat ramp or river access incline.

High - Expert

Medium - Intermediate

Medium - Beginner

Low - No fun, expect a lot of sandy portage

ADDITIONAL SAFETY INDICATORS

Three pilot site options have real time USGS flow rate data available. Some sites feature real-time data monitoring other aspects of water quality. Add-on solutions to presenting these quality issues within the artwork are welcomed. They are not available for many sites where the work might be installed and therefore should not be the primary mode of operation.

Users enjoy the river for recreation, respite, and subsistence. In addition to communicating safety measures, Shoreline Signals must call users to the water's edge to explore and appreciate. Other safety issues include

- **navigation—where to get out? how to be located if help is needed?**
- **life jackets are essential for all skill levels**
- **alcohol and substances create unsafe experiences**
- **different routes have varying levels of obstacles and other challenges**
- **feeling welcomed by neighboring river users**
- **rivers are dynamic**

Real-time data from USGS flows:

- [Beaver Creek](#)
- [Racoon](#)
- [Des Moines River](#) near Saylorville
- **Non-data driven and/or informal means of assessing appropriate flow are available (i.e. if that rock is underwater the river is too fast)**

LOCATION

Three existing river access points are identified as potential sites for Shoreline Signals. *The artist will design a prototype that would work generally for any CIWT access point. One or more (as budget allows) of the three sites described here will receive the proof of concept installation.*

Additional information—in some cases including in-progress construction

documents and site plans—are available in attached documents and on request. Each of the three locations are already undergoing various manners of improvements as part of the CIWT. They represent the various forms and context in which lowans find river access points. Although each of these sites are unique, the final project is intended to be repeatable for additional installations, as variant scales of a similar idea, or in conversation with each other. Successful proposals are likely to include scalable solutions.

Prospect Park

Prospect Park is situated in a neighborhood where 25% of the population lives below the poverty line and 18% are immigrants and refugees. In its 2016 Community Engagement Report the Des Moines MPO identified these residents' need for safe water access to fish for sustenance and play safely at the water's edge. The City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department added ADA accessible shelters and play areas yet the waterfront remains mostly undeveloped, until CIWT improvements begin construction to welcome neighbors to the river.

Prospect Park currently has a master plan underway. USGS flow data is available

for the river, and some water quality monitoring is currently taking place. A cultural assessment will be completed as part of permitting for the construction phase of the improvements described in the master plan and will be available to artists at that time. Prospect Park offers fishing, respite, and boating.

Walnut Woods

This is the least developed site, and it does not currently have an expectation for construction or new improvements to the river access site. Walnut Woods is state-owned park land. Additional soft trails are planned to connect existing soft trails to the river. A park ranger for Walnut Woods will consult to determine appropriate sites for Shoreline Signals.

Surveys may be needed as determined by the Office of the State of Archaeology. USGS flows are available but it does not currently have water quality monitoring.

Beaver Creek

Beaver Creek is in City of Johnston. A site plan and construction documents for the 70th St carry-down access points are available. This site is already constructed. Reports from existing cultural assessments are available. Water quality monitoring is active and ongoing at this site.

SELECTION PROCESS

Concept selection will be based on:

- Demonstrated experience on projects of similar size and prominence
- Successful communication of real-time river data by mechanical means and/or through advanced technologies
- Likelihood of communities to adopt and replicate Shoreline Signals at their access points (reproducible and scalable)
- Success translating/expressing the concept/goals through the artist's typical mode of expression
- The durability of previous artwork relative to environment, including theft and vandalism
- Expression of vision, as expressed in the artist's proposal

The art selection committee, facilitated by Group Creatives, will include representatives of project partners including Polk County, Bravo Greater Des Moines, the Great Outdoors Foundation, and citizen stakeholders. They reserve the right not to select any proposal.

If selected to complete the project, a refined budget, timeline, and plans are expected as part of a revised proposal prior to implementation.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE

Artists begin proposal development	Nov 2020
Site visits and engagement	Dec/Jan 2020
Proposals due	2/28/21
Artists notified of project selection	March 2021
Onsite testing	June 2021
Project completion	Summer 2022

SHORELINE SIGNALS PROJECT TIMELINE

PHASE 1: JULY 1, 2020 – WINTER 2020

- Internal team establishes evaluation framework, equity tools, confirm community needs from existing and potential user groups and determine site parameters with land managers, engineers and river ecologists
- **CURRENT STAGE - Distribute RFO/RFP; solicit proposals from three qualified artists**
- Artists tour three river sites and engage with communities and users

PHASE 2: WINTER 2020 – SPRING 2021

- Review artists' design concepts; ensure criteria met
- Convene panel from stakeholders to select artist and design
- Engineers review the design; problem-solve structural or safety issues
- Engage community, users and land managers for feedback; adjust
- Selected artist works with CIWT & is announced

PHASE 3: SUMMER 2021 – SPRING 2022

- Artist executes proof-of-concept for on-site testing assuring the design can be easily replicated 40+ times for installation at future sites
- Gather community and partner feedback; problem-solve
- Document the process with photos and video to widely market the arts initiative

PHASE 4: SUMMER 2022

- Work with jurisdictions to install public art at up to three sites and invite residents to engage
- Gather feedback and evaluate project success



- = WATER ACCESS SITE
- = BODY OF WATER

 Shoreline Signals Pilot Site

Prospect Park Site



BUDGET

This project is supported through the generosity of the Great Outdoors Foundation, Polk County, Bravo Greater Des Moines, community partners, the Iowa Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts' Our Town program.

The selected artist will receive \$25,500 for an artist fee and design rights. The fabrication budget of \$75,000 is inclusive of testing and fabrication of final

installation at up to three sites. The budget includes additional funds to support travel, insurance, documentation and in-kind services related to transportation and installation of artwork. As a regional project, Shoreline Signals enjoys substantial existing resources from professional services such as engineering and water quality consultation that will be available for development and completion of the project through completion of the

proof of concept/installed prototype. Specific needs related to professional services, however, may not always be available and could require investment by the artist from the fabrication budget.

PARTNERS AND RESOURCES

The Great Outdoors Foundation (GOF) catalyzes high impact projects. Beginning as a fundraiser serving environmental education, stewardship and infrastructure needs of Polk County Conservation, it expanded to raise funds and advocate on behalf of other greenway projects including a \$5 million campaign for the Clive Greenbelt and completion of the Jester Park Nature Center.

GOF advances conservation issues by combining education with creation of outdoor recreation infrastructure. GOF is Central Iowa's pathway to sustainable, healthy environments. We are a regional conservation leader and a catalyst for high impact environmental projects. We convene partners with a shared vision, drive collaboration and raise funds and awareness. Our priority initiatives expand and restore natural spaces, foster outdoor recreation, promote conservation and build passion for nature.

CIWT will connect more than 150 miles of water trails and 86 access sites throughout the region. Initially funded by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the plan was developed over four years by the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with

additional strategic planning by the GOF. The CIWT is housed under our umbrella yet is supported by a regional coalition of organizations working together through Capital Crossroads, Catch Des Moines, the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, and the MPO. GOF provides the framework to coordinate operations, maintenance, governance, funding, inclusion and marketing of this large and complex regional endeavor. To date, the GOF has secured \$20 million in private funds to support the CIWT.

Polk County

Polk County, led by its Board of Supervisors, is the governing body for Iowa's most populated county serving 487,284 residents. Committed to the betterment of the Central Iowa's capital city region, the county supports area nonprofits, invests in economic development and provides leadership and momentum for transformational projects. Polk County is championing CIWT and Shoreline Signals as the latest demonstration of a new regional vision for arts that integrate with larger initiatives to maximize benefit. Polk County sees CIWT as an ideal platform to inspire our region to use art as more than

decoration. Recent infrastructure projects leveraged the power of the arts to build our community's character and quality of place. This mindset informed the 2014–18 collaboration with the Great Outdoors Foundation to design and build Jester Park Nature Center, a distinct site that merges public art and nature in a lodge setting.

Bravo Greater Des Moines (Bravo)

Formed in 2004, Bravo leverages the investments of 17 local partner governments to maximize the impact arts, culture, and heritage have in advancing regional priorities.

Group Creative Services

Formed in 2014, Group Creative Services is a public art consultancy that believes artists are problem solvers and community builders. Art drives innovation, discovers efficiencies, integrates with infrastructure, and connects neighbors. Group facilitates projects of distinction to advance goals ranging from civic discourse to top of mind recognizability.

Group works on policy, planning, community assessment, engagement, public art facilitation, community building, public art process management, and creative

placemaking for public, NGO, and private entities.

Beaver Creek Site

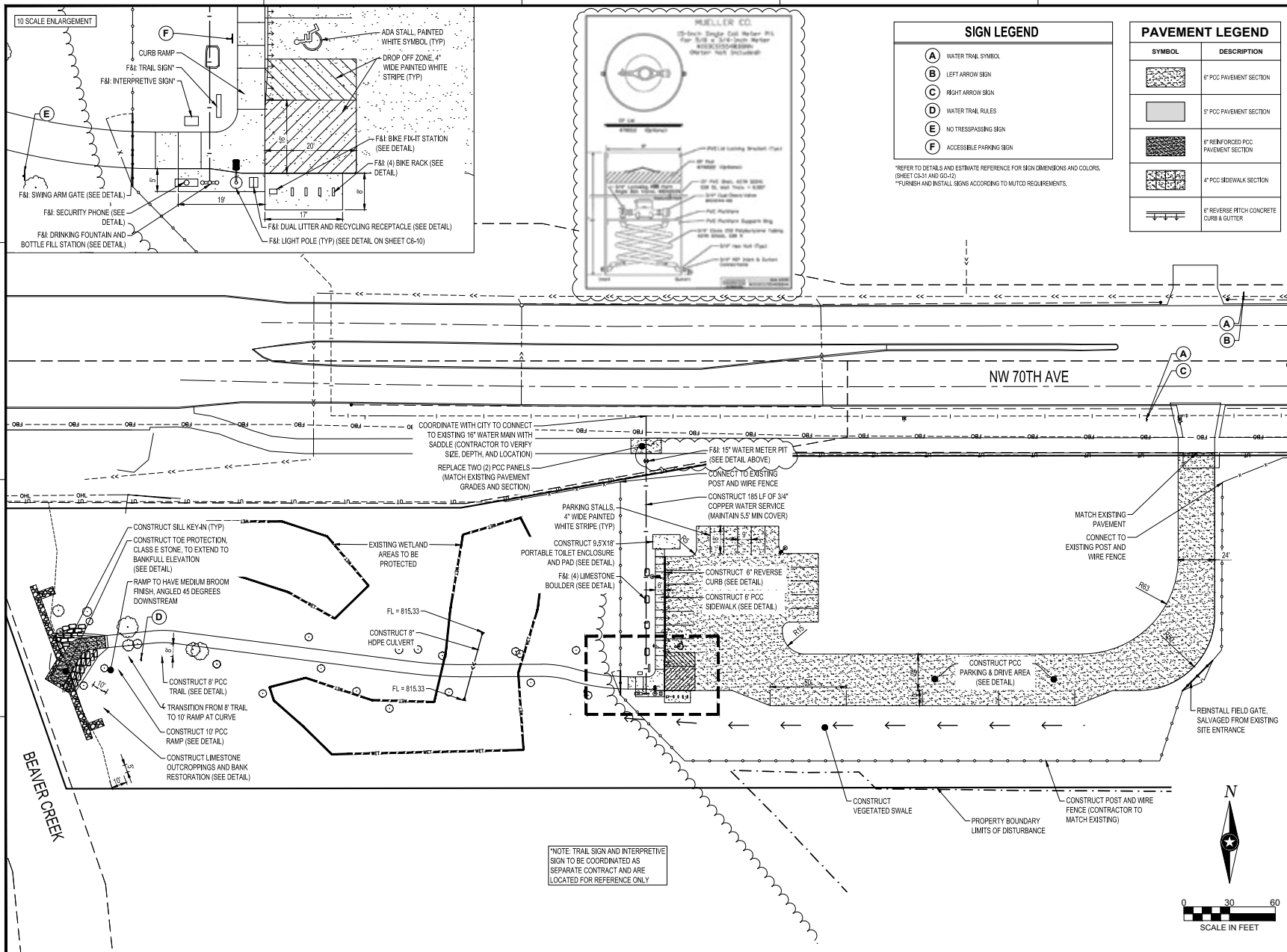
REGIONAL
PROJECT


JOHNSTON
BEAVER
CREEK


This rendering is an example
of river access points created
by the CIWT.



Beaver Creek Site







THRIVE. EVERY DAY.

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CITY OF JOHNSTON

70TH AVE ACCESS BEAVER CREEK

JOHNSTON IOWA

REVISION SCHEDULE		
DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY
05/17/2019	SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION #1	JAW

PROJECT NO. 17-21005
 CAD FILE NAME 21005 C3-SITE
 DRAWN BY JAW/BLF
 DESIGNED BY JAW/EBDA/ET
 REVIEWED BY EBDA/ET
 ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 10/26/18
 CLIENT PROJECT NO. -

PROPOSED SITE + UTILITY PLAN

SHEET

C3-10

Walnut Woods Site

