



# Onondaga Creekwalk Wayfinding Initiative

## Project Narrative

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Our proposal seeks funding to implement a wayfinding signage project along the Onondaga Creekwalk in Syracuse. The Syracuse Urbanism Club aims to enhance the trail's user-friendliness, making it more accessible and navigable for residents and visitors. Currently, the creekwalk is marked by a yellow line and a mix of metal signage on U-Channel posts. Since the trail zig zags through various inner-city blocks and traffic conditions, it is tough to navigate for the first-time user.

The Syracuse Urbanism Club proposes using paint to make the trail more navigable. In addition to making the trail more accessible for residents and visitors to navigate, this is an opportunity to highlight the connected neighborhoods and develop civic pride along this shared resource.

## Project Overview & Objectives

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The Onondaga Creekwalk connects diverse neighborhoods but lacks clear wayfinding, hindering users' navigation and enjoyment of the trail.

Our intervention will aim to:

- 1. Clarify the Pathways:** Install wayfinding signage at crucial points to guide users along the Creekwalk.
- 2. Enhance Accessibility:** Use painted ground signage to provide visual cues and directions.
- 3. Promote Civic Engagement:** Foster community involvement in the improvement of public spaces.
- 4. Provide a temporary solution for trail wayfinding and build the trail's user base.** Ideally, the increased use and attention will kickstart city-level efforts to find more permanent design/maintenance solutions.

Notably, **the project purposefully does NOT seek to solve wayfinding on the trail PERMANENTLY.** We will employ sidewalk paint, which can last 6 months to a couple years, depending on wear and tear.

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This is a modest, community-based approach to **temporarily bolster** the user interface in regard to wayfinding and nothing more.

**Ideally, this spurs the conversation on what permanent solutions ought to be.**

# Methods/Approach

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- **Pre-Application** - The Syracuse Urbanism Club hosted a Creekwalk during snowy/dark conditions on December 16th at 6 PM that was open to the public. 8-10 Syracuse residents attended and identified areas of common confusion.

The proposed method to improve the trail's wayfinding in the immediate term is **to paint stenciled signage on trail sidewalks**, leveraging the Urbanism Club's collective expertise and volunteer labor. This would coalesce into **a weekend (or multiple weekends) in the Spring of 2024 where this signage is applied via a community volunteer event** facilitated by the Urbanism Club, "painting day".

At current, **The Urbanism Club has a task group of 10 people** willing to execute this **and dozens of additional members** that can be activated for pointed tasks on a weekend project. This does not include volunteers outside of the Urbanism Club.

- **January through April**

1. **Develop and Design Wayfinding Signage.** Size is determined by what can be easily laser cut on chipboard and if and how many stencils can be loaded onto a cart that would be utilized for painting day. Multiple rounds of in-house testing could be involved to ensure a stencil could be used multiple times and produce consistent results, as these would be utilized by general public volunteers with club member supervision.
2. **Continually revise and revisit designs according to feedback from Parks and Recreation and DPW.** The sidewalks are primarily under the city's jurisdiction and would require permission and consideration from those respective offices. Those considerations include using proper paint to avoid unnecessary liability, coordinating and synchronizing with other ongoing efforts, and possibly conforming to pre-existing design standards the club is unaware of.

Most importantly, this period would be vital in establishing where each stencil would be applied. Locational considerations include visibility, nearby lighting, sidewalk conditions, and general user-friendliness.

3. **Purchase materials to execute the event.** These materials include carts, buckets of sidewalk-safe paint, roller brushes, roller heads, extension poles, paint trays, and chipboard and painter tape.
4. **Organize a campaign to recruit volunteers.** The Syracuse Urbanism Club's task force has ten members who will facilitate the actual event. The goal is to engage the rest of the club and the general public to have 20+ people working at any given time on painting day.

Our rough estimation anticipates six stencils per "Implementation Point" (see Map Section). There are 41 points identified on the map. If 20 people arrived (10 Task Force members and 10 volunteers) to help on painting day to give 3-4 hours, each individual (on average) would have 12-13 stencils to paint over that period. This is a conservative estimation.

In real life, volunteer demand could be much more substantial than ten volunteers willing to give 3-4 hours. This period would be necessary for answering how many volunteers we can

get, whether the work gets done in one weekend or multiple, whether we open a signup list due to overwhelming demand, whether we assign volunteers to specific intersections, and logistical factors not yet foreseen. The period would also be critical in marketing the event and its potential impact.

5. **Outreach to local neighborhood groups**, informing them of the event and recruiting volunteers.

▪ **April through May**

1. **Engage club and general public volunteers for implementation**, fostering a sense of community ownership. The club’s task force of 10 people would man three carts along the project area on an event day. Task Force members would serve to supply volunteers with tools and paint, provide direction on exactly where stencils are applied, and (most importantly) finish what general public volunteers do not.
2. **Ensure the painting event runs smoothly** and prepare for possibility of adverse weather and rain dates.
3. **Walk the trail before the event and chalk exact locations** for stencil application. Exact locations are informed by conversations had with DPW and the Parks and Rec Trails office.
4. **Monitor and ensure installation was executed properly**, obscure any mishaps, and ensure quality in application.



Potential 'You're on the Creekwalk' Sign Types.



Handicap Accessibility Sign Types.



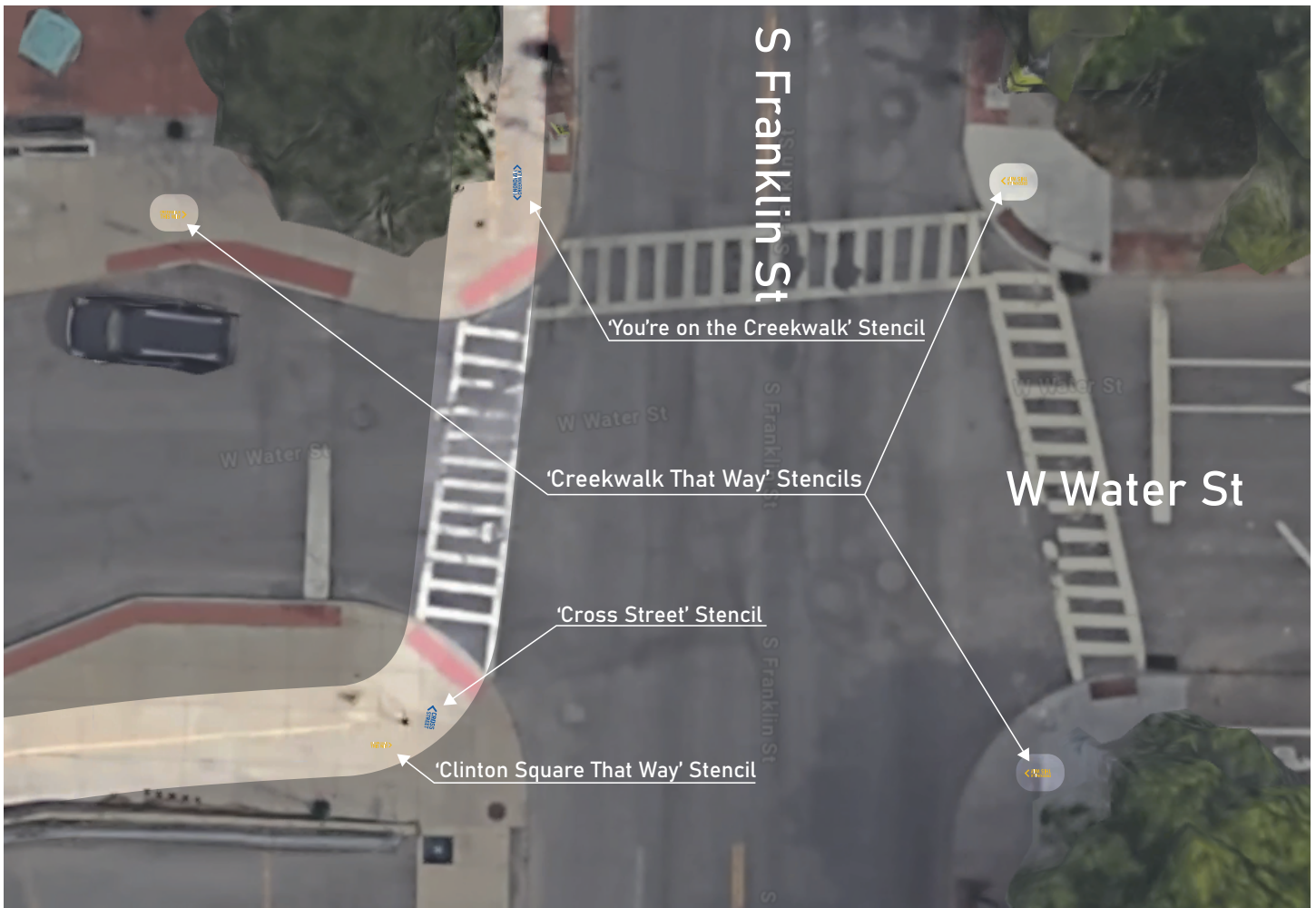
Sign informing users to cross street in order to stay on-trail.



Potential '[Civic Amenity] This Way' Sign Types.



Potential "Creekwalk this Way" Sign Types



Sample Intersection showing potential wayfinding solutions.

## Material Estimates

Based on prior experience from another club member, a ground mural of 2800 SF used roughly 40 gallons of paint. That amounts to ~.015 gallons of paint per SF of painted area. Stencils would be laser cut (certain club members can access such machinery) on 30" x 40" chipboard, which comes at ~\$2.75 a sheet at Blick Art Supplies. To cover a stencil that takes the full extent of that sheet would require roughly 0.125 gallons of paint.

There are 41 "Implementation Points" (or 'points'). We roughly estimate six applications of stencils per point, with each stencil taking .05 gallons of paint. This roughly adds up to a minimum of 7.5 gallons of paint on the Westside, 11.25 gallons in the Downtown, and 14.25 gallons in the Lakefront Sector. We plan on buying two colors, Sherwin Williams Blue Pro-Park (list price as of 12/29/23 at \$76.79/gallon) and Sherwin Williams Yellow Pro-Park (\$62.89/gallon yellow). We would buy one 5-gallon bucket of each color for each sector, plus supplementary gallons to account for mishaps or over-application by volunteers. That would total out to ~\$700 for 10 gallons of paint for the Westside, ~\$1000 for 14 gallons for Downtown, and ~\$1300 for 18 gallons for the Lakefront.

We would also purchase roller frames, roller brushes, extension poles, trays, and chipboard. We estimate these materials to cost \$200 per sector. See the application form for a detailed breakdown.

# Implementation Points & Sector Map

