

Pine Bluff Downtown Development, Inc.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Blues Junction Iconic Art Pole – Design & Fabrication

1. Introduction

Pine Bluff Downtown Development, Inc. (PBDD) invites qualified artists, designers, and fabrication teams to submit proposals for the design, fabrication, and installation of the **Iconic Art Pole** for the **Blues Junction Experience**, located within the **DRB Blues & Wellness Plaza** in downtown Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

This installation will serve as a **signature visual landmark** within the plaza and a defining feature of the emerging **Delta Rhythm & Bayous Cultural District**.

2. Project Context

The **DRB Blues & Wellness Plaza** is a multi-use public space that blends recreation, wellness, and cultural interpretation. It includes:

- Fitness and activity areas
- Pickleball courts
- Chess and game installations
- Children’s play areas
- Seating and gathering spaces
- A mural wall (approximately 100 ft x 12 ft) honoring regional blues and blues-influenced artists

The plaza represents the **first phase of a broader cultural district initiative**, designed to position Pine Bluff as a leading destination for Delta cultural tourism.

Within this setting, the **Blues Junction Experience** marks a historically significant block tied to Black cultural life, music, movement, and enterprise.

3. Project Scope

Primary Commission: Iconic Art Pole & Reflection Bench

The selected firm/team will be responsible for the **design, fabrication, and installation** of a large-scale sculptural art pole that functions as:

- A **visual anchor** for the plaza
- A **wayfinding element**
- A **symbolic representation** of the convergence of cultural forces that shaped the blues

Key Parameters:

- Approximate height: **20 feet** (current pole exists at site)
- Outdoor, permanent installation
- Must be durable and suitable for long-term public use

Design Considerations:

- May incorporate directional or geographic references to major blues cities
- May include abstract or symbolic sculptural elements (e.g., rhythm, movement, migration)
- Should avoid cliché or overly literal representations
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4. Coordination Responsibilities

While this RFP focuses exclusively on the **Iconic Art Pole**, the selected firm will:

- **Collaborate with the project principal/design lead** to ensure aesthetic alignment with:
 - The interpretive monument
 - The sculptural reflection bench
- Contribute to a **cohesive visual identity** across the Blues Junction installation

Important Clarification:

The selected firm **will NOT** be responsible for:

- Developing interpretive narratives
 - Creating storytelling content
 - Designing or producing digital/QR-based experiences
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5. Design Intent

The Iconic Art Pole should:

- Function as an **instantly recognizable landmark**
 - Reflect **movement, convergence, and cultural depth**
 - Be visually compelling from multiple distances
 - Reinforce the identity of Blues Junction as a **place of layered history and cultural significance**
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6. Budget

Estimated Budget: \$36,000 (To be finalized)

Budget should include:

- Design and concept development
 - Fabrication
 - Materials
 - Transportation
 - Installation
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7. Deliverables

The selected firm will provide:

- Concept renderings and design development package
 - Material and fabrication specifications
 - Fabrication and installation plan
 - Final installed artwork
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8. Eligibility

This RFP is open to:

- Public artists
- Sculptors
- Fabrication teams

- Architects and industrial designers
- Multidisciplinary teams

Applicants should demonstrate experience with:

- Large-scale outdoor installations
- Durable materials and fabrication methods
- Public-facing landmark projects

9. Submission Requirements

Proposals must include:

1. **Statement of Interest** (max 2 pages)
2. **Preliminary Design Concept**
3. **Portfolio of Relevant Work (3–5 projects)**
4. **Team Qualifications**
5. **Preliminary Budget Estimate**
6. **Project Timeline**
7. **Must be installed no later than March 1, 2027**

10. Selection Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated based on:

- Strength and originality of design concept
- Experience with large-scale public installations
- Fabrication feasibility and durability
- Ability to create a landmark-quality structure
- Capacity to collaborate within a broader design framework

11. Timeline

- RFP Release: [July 15,2026]
- Submission Deadline: [July 1]
- Finalist Selection: [July 15 2026]
- Project Start: [July 17,2026]
- Installation Target: [March 1, 2027]

12. Location

DRB Blues & Wellness Plaza
Downtown Pine Bluff, Arkansas

Detailed site information will be provided to shortlisted teams.

13. Contact Information

Pine Bluff Downtown Development, Inc. (PBDD)

For questions or proposal submissions, please contact:

Angelisa Henry
Email: hello@pbdowntown.org
Phone: 870-536-8742

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Phone: 937-241-3867

All questions regarding this RFP should be submitted via email.

14. Additional Notes

- PBDD reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal
- Final design will be refined collaboratively with project leadership
- All work must meet applicable safety and installation standards

Closing Statement

The Iconic Art Pole will stand as the visual signal of Blues Junction—marking a place where movement, memory, and music converge. This commission calls for more presence and less explanation.