

Waukee Railroad Pergola: In the Shadow of the Rails is a Trailhead gateway and the centerpiece of a regional vision plan to unify and enhance the 89-mile Raccoon River Valley Trail Corridor as a nationally recognized visitor destination. A key component of the initiative is the construction of commonly themed iconic public art installations at trail towns and trailheads along the route, establishing a common identity for promoting and marketing the Corridor and its 14 communities. The “In the Shadow of the Rails” theme was selected for its regional relevance, which reflects and celebrates the railroad heritage shared by all trail communities. The present-day trail system operates virtually “in the shadow” of the original rails, renewing vitality, commerce and the historic connections which link these population centers.

When completed, the 89-mile project will be the longest linear public art installation in the country!



Facts About the Waukee Trailhead Public Art Installation

-  Planning & design began April 2013; construction completed March 2018
-  Designed and constructed by RDG Dahlquist Art Studio, Des Moines, IA
-  Total cost of \$1.12 million (includes trailhead parking and site enhancements)
-  Funded by private, corporate and public donations and grants, in partnership with the City of Waukee and the Waukee Betterment Foundation
-  The design embraces the “In the Shadow of the Rails” theme, using railroad and train imagery, dimensions and colors

Main art features include:

- Pergola: 32, 13-foot tall columns wrapped in artistic ceramic tile with overhead steel beams and stylized rails form a 15-foot high, 350-foot long pergola over the trail; featuring LED night lighting.
- Shade & Solar Power Structure: Eight 13-foot tall columns wrapped in artistic ceramic tile with nine solar panels mounted on an overhead steel structure; this provides power to the site.
- Streetside Bollards: 16, seven-foot tall columns wrapped in artistic ceramic tile with LED night lighting.
- 5,816 individually hand crafted ceramic tiles required 29 tons of clay, 113 gallons of glaze, 12 craftspeople and 11 months to create. It took another 550 labor hours to install.



Additional “In the Shadow of the Rails” installations are now underway at the following Raccoon River Valley Trail locations:

Phase II Projects

(Funded and planned for construction 2018)

- Dallas Center
- Minburn
- Perry
- Winkleman Switch
- Cooper
- Jefferson

Phase III Projects

(Planning/fundraising now)

- Panora
- Adel
- Others