

# CITY OF MUSCATINE



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
215 SYCAMORE STREET  
MUSCATINE, IA 52761  
PH. (563) 264-1550 Ext. 166

## For more information contact:

Kevin Jenison  
Communication Manager  
Public Information Officer  
City of Muscatine, Iowa  
(563) 264-1550 Ext. 166  
[kjenison@muscataineiowa.gov](mailto:kjenison@muscataineiowa.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

## CITY UNVEILS PUBLIC ART AT CITY HALL BUS SHELTER

Vinyl graphics celebrate local history, culture; City looks to expand to other shelters

### MUSCATINE, Iowa –

Muscatine Public Transit, the City of Muscatine, and the Stanley Center for Peace and Security are proud to announce the installation of new public art at the Muscatine City Hall bus shelter, transforming an ordinary



transit stop into a vibrant celebration of local history and culture.

The shelter, located at City Hall, has been wrapped in colorful vinyl graphics inspired by the book *Susie Clark: The Bravest Girl You've Ever Seen* written by Waterloo, Iowa, native Joshalyn Hickey-Johnson and illustrated by Clinton, Iowa, artist Hayle Calvin.

# CITY OF MUSCATINE

---



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
215 SYCAMORE STREET  
MUSCATINE, IA 52761  
PH. (563) 264-1550 Ext. 166

---

The book tells the story of Susan "Susie" Clark, who, at just 13 years old, became the first Black student in the United States to integrate a public school through a court order. Her father, Alexander Clark—a Muscatine resident and prominent Civil Rights leader—filed a lawsuit in 1868 that was decided by the Iowa Supreme Court the same year. The ruling guaranteed all Iowa children the right to attend public school regardless of race, religion, or nationality.

This precedent-setting case laid the groundwork for educational equality nearly a century before the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*.

"The City Hall bus shelter now tells a powerful story that belongs to Muscatine and to the nation," Public Transit Supervisor Amy Fortenbacher said. "By honoring Susie and Alexander Clark, we are not only beautifying our public spaces but also reminding the community of Muscatine's lasting impact on the fight for civil rights."

The installation is part of a larger effort to bring public art into Muscatine's everyday spaces, enriching the transit experience while celebrating the city's history and diversity.

"Public art is about making connections," Melanie Alexander, Muscatine Art Center Director, said. "This project connects the past with the present and ensures that stories like Susie Clark's continue to inspire future generations."

The idea for the installation of public art in the bus shelters began in December 2023 when Fortenbacher reached out to Alexander to discuss ways of making the shelters more appealing and appreciated by their neighbors. Alexander presented the idea to the Public Art Advisory Commission who were in full support.

# CITY OF MUSCATINE

---



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
215 SYCAMORE STREET  
MUSCATINE, IA 52761  
PH. (563) 264-1550 Ext. 166

The Stanley Center for Peace and Security was asked if they would like to partner in the creation of the artwork, and Krista Regennitter, program officer for global education received approval to move forward with the project as well.

Three vinyl graphic artists were contacted to provide a quote with Jim Hetzler, owner of Hetz Studio of Muscatine, receiving the \$1,600 contract for one shelter. That cost was split between the City and the Stanley Center.

"The primary goal of this pilot project is to encourage interest from other organizations or community groups to sponsor a bus shelter and design artwork for the shelter with the ultimate vision of securing sponsorship for all 12 bus shelters," Fortenbacher said.

Any community group or organization will need to be able to share in the cost of the vinyl application. Proposed vinyl graphics would be presented to the Public Art Commission for recommendations and project approval. Fortenbacher also said that she hopes to be able to budget a portion of her advertising budget to go towards these projects with a goal of one or two sponsorships per year.

"We also hope that the addition of public art to our bus shelters will serve to enhance the surrounding areas while providing a unique opportunity for community engagement and enrichment," Fortenbacher said.

The Muscatine City Hall bus shelter is now open for residents and visitors to experience. Information about Muscatine Public Transit (MuscaBus) routes and services is available at the following link [PUBLIC TRANSIT](#). Information about Susan Clark and the book that inspired the bus shelter is available at the following link: <http://stanleycenter.org/susie-clark>.

# CITY OF MUSCATINE

---



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION  
215 SYCAMORE STREET  
MUSCATINE, IA 52761  
PH. (563) 264-1550 Ext. 166

---

-30-