Project Narrative Attachment

Proposal title: Chesapeake Access: Digital Outdoor and Heritage Visitor Experience Pilot

Applicant: Global Ikon, LLC | Maryland Veteran-Owned Small Business

Opportunity: P27AS00032 — Exploring and Enhancing Outdoor and Heritage Tourism in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Grant category: Linking Tourism and Economic Development (proposed)

Proposed site: North Point State Park, Baltimore County, Maryland — site participation and all field activities subject to written Maryland DNR approval.

1. Project Overview: Purpose, Goals, Objectives, and Public Benefit

Global Ikon, LLC proposes a mobile-friendly, accessible digital visitor experience that helps residents and travelers discover the Chesapeake Bay watershed through public outdoor recreation and place-based interpretation. The proposed North Point State Park pilot would combine easy-to-navigate visitor information, audio-accessible interpretive content, and links to nearby community destinations in one low-barrier online experience. The project would supplement—not replace—existing Maryland DNR publications, park signage, safety rules, or official websites.

This proposal responds to an identifiable opportunity to make public visitor information easier to discover and use across devices, particularly for first-time visitors, people needing accessible formats, and visitors planning hiking, fishing, waterfront recreation, and other permitted activities. These are proposed service enhancements; the park has not supplied a formal needs assessment or confirmed a technology deficit.

The public-purpose objectives are to (1) create a usable digital orientation and interpretation tool for a Chesapeake watershed destination; (2) present accessible, plain-language visitor materials based on approved information; (3) connect recreational opportunities and local heritage with nearby community tourism assets; and (4) evaluate usefulness and engagement using consent-respecting, aggregate measures.

2. Proposed Deliverables and Visitor Experience

Visitor orientation hub. A responsive website designed for ordinary mobile browsers and desktop use, with clear links to official park resources, general preparation guidance, permitted recreation categories, emergency and safety links, and conservation messaging. It will be usable without installing an app.

Accessible trails and waterfront information. Proposed map-based content and searchable activity pages covering hiking, water access and fishing, and—only where authorized and clearly marked—hunting-zone and archery information. All boundary, permit, season, closure, and safety details must be drawn from or linked to authoritative DNR information, not independently asserted.

Digital heritage and conservation storytelling. Short interpretive pages and optional audio narration describing authorized historical, ecological, and cultural themes, with plain-language text and mobile-compatible presentation. Historic claims and copyrighted materials will be checked and approved before publication.

Local tourism connection. A curated, nonexclusive directory or route-planning section connecting visitors with nearby public heritage sites and independently verified visitor-serving businesses, subject to applicable state rules and neutral inclusion criteria. No business endorsement by DNR or NPS will be implied.

Demonstration and evaluation package. An offline reviewable prototype, accessibility testing notes, approved content inventory, implementation guidance, aggregate usage metrics (if launched), and a final public-facing findings summary.

3. Location, Existing Resources, and Site Permissions

The intended project geography is the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Maryland, with North Point State Park in Baltimore County proposed as a pilot interpretation site. Public-facing material may also connect visitors to other appropriate watershed destinations, subject to source verification and permissions.

On November 4, 2026, William J. Pate of Global Ikon spoke by telephone with Ranger Dirk at North Point State Park (410-477-0757). Ranger Dirk identified hiking trails, waterfront access/fishing, five hunting zones, and archery as recreational areas that could be considered when scoping visitor information. He indicated that park maps, photographs, and historical or educational materials may be available, but also that visitor statistics, contracts, formal support, and installation decisions require management or higher-level review. These are preliminary outreach observations, not a formal agency determination of need or a commitment to participate.

Ranger Dirk directed further approval coordination to Luke Terrell at Gunpowder Falls State Park headquarters and/or authorized Maryland Department of Natural Resources leadership in Annapolis. Luke Terrell is the identified referral for the next approval discussion; his precise delegated signature authority has not been confirmed. No park agreement, installation permission, data-sharing commitment, or letter of support has been received.

No QR markers, physical signage, field equipment, branded materials, park-specific map overlays, or on-site visitor surveys will be deployed without prior written authorization, appropriate review, and any necessary permit. The proposed design prioritizes an independently developed, remotely reviewable prototype that can be modified to match state policy. If authorization cannot be obtained, project implementation will be paused or a separately authorized eligible site will be sought, with any material scope change subject to NPS approval.

4. Connection to the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act and Interpretation

The Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act provides a framework for interpreting and connecting watershed resources and helping the public discover natural, historical, cultural, and recreational places. The proposed project supports this mission through public-interest interpretation, low-friction orientation, access to trails and waterfront experiences, and a connected set of stories across outdoor recreation, coastal heritage, conservation, and local communities. Content will encourage responsible visitation, respect for natural resources, and compliance with all official park regulations.

The pilot is intentionally digital-first: it can help visitors plan a visit before arriving, access approved material from compatible devices, and use audio or text alternatives when appropriate. Because mobile connectivity may vary, content will be lightweight, downloadable where licensing and authorization permit, and supplemented by links to official sources. No guarantee of service coverage inside the park is made.

5. Connection to Tourism and Economic Impact

The project's economic development strategy is to lower information barriers that may discourage visits or limit exploration beyond a single attraction. A usable digital visitor journey could help individuals plan trips, discover multiple nearby resources, spend more time in the broader gateway community, and choose local visitor-serving amenities. These are expected pathways of benefit, not verified economic results.

Proposed outcomes include at least one publicly reviewable digital prototype, a directory of verified nearby tourism assets, and a structured plan to measure navigation usage, click-throughs to official visitor resources, optional visitor feedback, and any voluntarily provided stakeholder observations. Project success would be assessed against a baseline established after approvals—not against invented or inaccessible attendance statistics. Changes in actual visitor count or dollars spent will not be claimed without defensible data.

Economic indicators will be reported conservatively: content engagement, outbound links to local resources, number of visitor information assets improved, and optional

anonymized feedback. Any later estimate of additional visitors or spending will disclose assumptions, source dates, uncertainty, and limitations. A later-phase community-business component may be developed only with local input and clear, neutral participation rules.

6. Community Collaboration and Partnership Status

Global Ikon initiated outreach to North Point State Park on November 4, 2026. Park personnel did not reject the concept but were unable to confirm partnership interest or authorization and referred the request to higher management. Accordingly, North Point State Park and Maryland DNR are prospective stakeholders only. Their participation, concurrence with roles, access to records, staff support, and formal approvals remain pending. No park ranger or manager has been represented as a committed project partner.

Proposed state role, subject to voluntary agreement: designate an authorized reviewer; advise on allowable sites and activities; review public-facing interpretive accuracy and safety information; and determine whether any on-site display or outreach is appropriate. Global Ikon would independently manage design, content drafting, testing, vendor coordination, documentation, and reporting under any NPS award. No DNR cash contribution or staff commitment is assumed.

Global Ikon will also seek participation from appropriate local tourism, historical, accessibility, and community organizations to validate visitor needs and strengthen community benefit. Such partners will not be named as committed without documented consent. This proposal transparently notes the absence of confirmed partner concurrence; the applicant recognizes that the NPS review criteria call for partner awareness and support.

7. Work Plan, Milestones, and Decision Gates

Months 1–2 — Authorization and discovery. Confirm applicant network eligibility; request written DNR review and any needed site approvals; identify community reviewers; inventory public and licensed source material; establish project baseline and privacy/accessibility requirements. Hold point: do not begin park-facing implementation until permissions are documented.

Months 3–4 — User experience design. Interview willing stakeholders or test with consenting participants, create information architecture, design accessible wireframes, and draft a source-verified content plan; review with authorized contacts when available.

Months 5–7 — Prototype development. Build mobile web prototype, navigation pages, text/audio content and verified regional tourism links; perform testing for common browsers, small screens and assistive technologies.

Months 8–9 — Review and controlled pilot. Submit park-specific materials for authorized review. Launch a digital or on-site pilot only after approval, with no unpermitted installation or implied agency endorsement.

Months 10–12 — Evaluation and handoff. Assess aggregate usage where available, document lessons learned, correct usability issues, produce a sustainability and maintenance plan, and submit required performance and financial reports.

8. Organizational Qualifications and Capacity

Global Ikon, LLC is a Maryland-based, veteran-owned small business proposing to apply its software development, cybersecurity, communications, and systems-planning capabilities to a public-oriented tourism information project. Project lead William J. Pate brings operational coordination, information technology, and cybersecurity education and experience. The company will use a phased implementation model with scoped deliverables, documentation, security checks, accessibility review, and explicit owner approval of consequential actions.

The applicant will retain responsibility for project management, fiscal controls, contract compliance, product design, and reporting. Specialist consultants—for accessibility review, professional interpretation, or design—may be engaged within the approved budget as necessary. Project staffing, rates, and any contracted services must match the separately submitted SF-424A and detailed budget narrative.

Existing company-owned computing equipment may be used as available infrastructure but will not be charged again as newly purchased grant equipment, nor treated as a matching contribution without an allowable, supportable valuation and specific approval. No required cash match is assumed.

9. Risk Management, Accessibility, and Stewardship

The principal risks are lack of state approval, uncertain partner concurrence, unknown baseline attendance data, content accuracy, visitor safety, accessibility, variable connectivity, and sustained maintenance. Controls include a written-authority gate; approved content sources; reliance on official park regulations; no physical installation before permission; minimal data collection; no unnecessary personal information; privacy notices if usage analytics are approved; secure software practices; and a documented handoff/maintenance process.

Digital resources will be designed toward WCAG 2.2 AA accessibility practices where feasible, using readable text, keyboard-accessible controls, alternate text, captions/transcripts where applicable, and audio options. Park-specific safety information will be presented as links to the official source, with clear notice that conditions and rules can change.

10. Evaluation, Sustainability, and Funding Alignment

Proposed deliverable measures: (1) one functioning prototype; (2) a verified inventory of visitor, heritage, and safety-information topics; (3) documented accessibility and functional test results; (4) a review-ready partner coordination and approval record; (5) at least one visitor-oriented digital information experience that can be demonstrated without on-site equipment; and (6) a final evaluation and future-maintenance plan. Numerical attendance and monetary benefits will be assessed only if credible evidence becomes available.

The request falls within the Linking Tourism and Economic Development project category. The SF-424, SF-424A, and separate Budget Narrative control all requested dollar totals, periods, and line-item costs; this narrative does not assert a funding amount that could conflict with those forms. Planned costs should primarily support allowable design, content verification, accessibility work, pilot implementation after permission, evaluation, and reporting.

Future sustainability would prioritize lightweight hosting, clear content ownership, low maintenance requirements, periodic reviews of official links, and a feasible path for an authorized partner or another eligible operator to maintain the experience after the grant period. Any continued operation on state property would require a separate agreement if mandated.

11. Applicant Eligibility and Disclosure

Global Ikon understands that eligibility for P27AS00032 includes Chesapeake Gateways Network membership or any applicable self-nomination pathway identified by NPS. Applicant network status should be verified independently before submission; outreach to a park does not itself establish membership. This proposed narrative does not represent an executed DNR agreement or confirmed partner concurrence. All work is contingent on award conditions, applicable authorizations, and a scope approved by NPS.

Reference and Source Notes

National Park Service, Chesapeake Gateways Network Grants, https://www.nps.gov/locations/chesapeakebaywatershed/grants.htm (accessed November 4, 2026).

National Park Service, Grant Application Information and FAQs, https://www.nps.gov/locations/chesapeakebaywatershed/grants-application-faqs.htm (accessed November 4, 2026).

Applicant telephone conversation with Ranger Dirk, North Point State Park, November 4, 2026; applicant-maintained call notes. These notes document preliminary outreach, not agency approval.