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New Orleans chooses sculpture for evacuation spots

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Public art usually makes the news for the controversy it engenders. But sometimes, an outdoor artwork performs a civic function that everyone can agree upon.

This week, New Orleans chose a sculpture that will be reproduced around the city as markers for "evacuspots" -- designated points where people can gather to be transported out of town in the case of a mandatory evacuation. This obviously strikes a chord in a city that was devastated nearly seven years ago when Hurricane Katrina caused widespread flooding, leaving many residents stranded and without aid.

The sculpture, created by artist Douglas Kornfeld of Massachusetts, features the outline of a human form with a single arm raised. The Arts Council of New Orleans said that the artist will be paid $200,000 to create 17 sculptures to mark neighborhood pickup points.

The project is a partnership between the city's Percent for Art Program and the volunteer group Evacuteer.org. The pickup points are designated by New Orlean's City Assisted Evacuation Plan, which is intended to help those who lack the ability to self-evacuate.

Kornfield's winning design was chosen from a field of five semi-finalists, according to the Arts Council. The artist specializes in public artwork and has created pieces for public venues around the country.

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Photo: A rendering of the sculpture by artist Douglas Kornfeld. Credit: Douglas Kornfeld / Evacuteer.org

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