

THE SALISBURY PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

Paint The Pavement Project

Supporting Information



“Murals build a sense of community.

They make it welcoming and walkable and they make you want to go there.”

Muralist Grace McAmmond Talking with St. Louis Public Radio.

Cities globally have implemented artistic interventions in recent years. In NC, Raleigh, Greensboro, Charlotte, Carrboro, Chapel Hill, Durham and more have added painted crosswalks-- and there's more to it than just curb appeal.

Painted crosswalks present an opportunity to celebrate diversity, inclusivity, enrichment & creativity. The community-sourced creations encourage a sense of connectedness and collaboration, while making art that is accessible to all. Installations in Salisbury's Railwalk Arts district (funded by the North Carolina CARES for Arts Grant from Rowan Arts Council) will transform blasé white striped asphalt into vibrant, inspired installations. If that weren't enough, painted crosswalks offer these additional potential benefits:

Reduce Traffic Incidents

Seattle's top traffic engineer explained that painted crosswalks are statistically far safer than federally mandated crosswalks. He called their safety performance "phenomenal... For these locations; we're seeing a reduction in pedestrian collisions to the point that they're not really happening."

Feel Safer & Happier

A research study found that people felt 40% happier at painted intersections compared with typical intersections nearby; physiologically monitored stress levels were lower and people felt that strangers were more trustworthy. Art installations can also contrast negative mental health effects of concrete and asphalt, and can have therapeutic benefits for mentally ill and homeless populations.

Reduce Crime

Art installations create a sense that a space is cared for, which in turn make crimes of opportunity-

vandalism, drug use, illegal dumping, and robbery less likely, according to the Community Rejuvenation Project (CRP).

Increase Foot Traffic

Art installations create a “sense of place”, destination, and enliven an urban streetscape, resulting in added foot traffic. CRP found that people were 60% more likely to want to meet friends at a painted crosswalk than other locations nearby. This emotional bond can energize neglected and blighted areas, and enhance districts. In an era of social media, this lends itself to greater art-based tourism, and further defines the artistic identity for the Railwalk Arts District and Salisbury.

Maintain & Improve Property Values

Investing in art in our streets helps maintain property values while deterring crime. As people develop greater attachment to places, they are more likely to return, bring visitors and shop locally. Evidence shows that communities where people have a higher sense of attachment are correlated with higher GDP growth.

Improve Representation and Equity

Culturally-relevant art resulted in particularly increased positive associations with a location, CRP found. Art installations with a focus on diversity, equity and cultural identities can allow healing, and celebration of a shared vision of the future. Who decides on the art matters, too; the Salisbury Public Arts Committee has worked to create a diverse, representative Selections Committee for the Paint the Pavement Project.

“Experiment results suggest that cities can indeed improve wellbeing through interventions that inject nature, color, and unqie elements into public space. Participants [...] felt more care for these places. They felt that strangers were more trustworthy. And they were more willing to pick up litter.”

Happy Streets Living Lap Report.

Heightened Ownership of Our City

Participants in the CRP study expressed greater emotional attachment to the sites where there was more greenery and brightly-colored paint. They were more likely to pick up litter there, and more likely to return. “Sites that indicated community involvement -DIY projects, signs of local maintenance, reflections of local culture- all scored highly among participants for likelihood to return and care for the site.”

Stellar Cost to Benefit Ratio

Art installations can transform blighted areas and are a relatively inexpensive method of urban redevelopment. The “Paint the Pavement” project in Salisbury is being covered entirely by a Grant from Rowan Arts Council!

