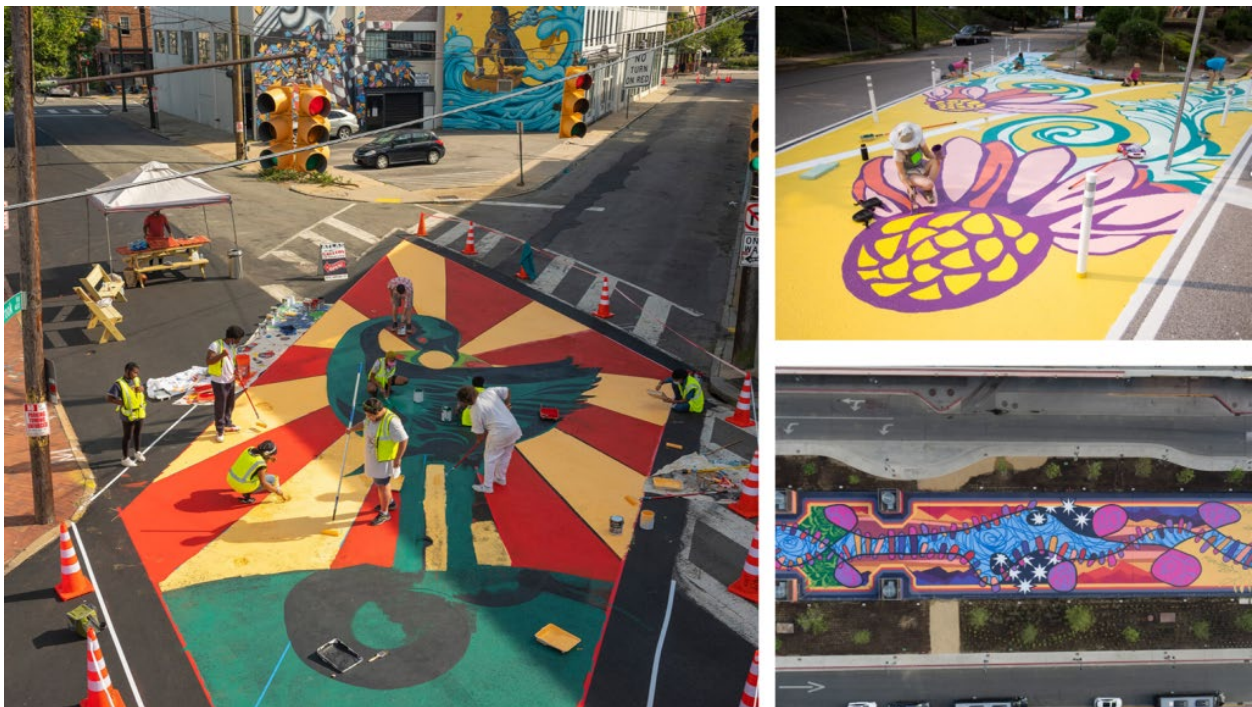


Bloomberg Philanthropies' Asphalt Art Initiative Expands Grant Opportunity to Cities in Canada, Mexico, and the United States

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All Canadian, Mexican, and U.S. cities can apply for grants for arts-driven street redesigns that improve safety, revitalize public spaces, and engage local communities

Three previous rounds of Asphalt Art Initiative grants have supported 64 projects spanning 41 U.S. cities and 22 European cities



Left: Richmond, Virginia (USA) Mural Design by Chris Visions Top right: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (USA) Mural Design by the Tim Engelhardt and Randi Stewart Bottom right: Reno, Nevada (USA) Mural Design by Brad Carney

New York, NY – Bloomberg Philanthropies announced today that all cities in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. can apply for \$25,000 USD Asphalt Art Initiative grants to help improve street safety, activate public spaces, and engage community residents. The expansion of the Asphalt Art Initiative to Canada and Mexico builds upon three rounds of previous Asphalt Art Initiative grants made in 2020-2022, supporting a total of 64 projects spanning 41 U.S. cities and 22 European cities. The initiative invites Canadian, Mexican, and U.S. cities of any size to apply by June 12, 2023. Up to twenty winning cities will be announced in the fall with selected projects planned for installation throughout 2024. In addition to grants, the selected cities will receive technical consulting provided by Bloomberg Associates in partnership with tactical urbanism firm Street Plans Collaborative. The application and city selection guidelines are available at AsphaltArt.bloomberg.org.

Bloomberg Philanthropies' Asphalt Art Initiative responds to the growing number of cities around the world embracing art as an effective and low-cost strategy to improve street safety through interventions on crosswalks, intersections, plazas, and other transportation infrastructure. In addition to safer streets, the program creates vibrant public spaces, fosters a city's interagency collaboration, and increases each city's capacity to work with artists as well as community groups on creative projects. The 64 projects supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies completed to date have transformed a combined 360,464 square feet of streetscape with artwork while engaging nearly 7,765 residents and 178 artists in the design and installation process.

The Asphalt Art Initiative is inspired by work done to improve pedestrian safety and revitalize New York City streets during Michael R. Bloomberg's mayoralty (2002-2013) and Bloomberg Philanthropies' pro bono consultancy, Bloomberg Associates, which, as part of their scope, advises cities around the world on implementing arts-driven street design projects.

"The number of cities proving the power of asphalt art projects continues to grow," said **Michael R. Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies and Bloomberg LP and 108th mayor of New York City**. "Through this latest round of grants, we'll help more communities make their public spaces safer and more inviting. It's amazing what a few cans of paint – and a forward-looking community – can achieve."

Data shows that asphalt art projects at problematic intersections or locations in need of safety improvements can lead to a dramatic reduction in traffic crashes and unsafe driving:

- The *Asphalt Art Safety Study*, released by Bloomberg Philanthropies in collaboration with Sam Schwartz Consulting in 2022, found traffic safety to be demonstrably improved across a cohort of 22 asphalt art projects in the U.S. The study results showed a 50% drop in the rate of crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists and a 27% increase in the rate of drivers yielding to pedestrians with the right of way.
- In Baltimore, Maryland and Tucson, Arizona, arts-based street safety projects more than doubled the share of drivers yielding to people crossing the street.
- In Kansas City, Missouri, the artistic redesign of an intersection known for dangerously speeding drivers saw average traffic speeds drop by 45%.
- The projects have also impacted the way residents feel while crossing the street; in Durham, North Carolina, the percentage of people who felt unsafe crossing fell from 85% to only 6%.

Additionally, cities participating in the Asphalt Art Initiative have creatively reimagined spaces to bring residents together:

- A project in Chattanooga, Tennessee repurposed a parking lane to create a community-designed gathering space near a new supermarket in a neighborhood that had been a food desert.

- In Troy, New York, the city painted murals to revitalize a 500-foot stretch of a highway underpass that divided the downtown from lower-income neighborhoods to the north.
- In East Providence, Rhode Island, where five whimsical crosswalk murals now connect an elementary school to a nearby park, the share of residents who feel positively about the street rose from 20% to 93%.

“With 64 projects across two continents, the Asphalt Art program has helped neighborhoods create new public spaces with roadway redesigns that make cities safer,” **said Janette Sadik-Khan, Principal for Transportation at Bloomberg Associates and former Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation.** “As the Initiative expands, more cities will have the chance to implement arts-driven street designs that not only improve the quality of our lives – but actually save them.”

“The Asphalt Art Initiative has transformed roadways that are hostile to pedestrians into urban highlights that bring the local community together,” **said Kate D. Levin, who leads the Arts Program at Bloomberg Philanthropies as well as the Cultural Assets Management practice at Bloomberg Associates, and is the former commissioner of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.** “This new round of projects will continue the initiative’s mission to use public art for social cohesion, enhancing neighborhood identity and giving the power to shape local urban landscapes to people in those communities.”

Resources for cities:

To help create asphalt art projects, cities can consult with the [Asphalt Art Guide](#), which provides case studies and best practices from cities around the world. The guide, which has been accessed over 8,000 times by governments and other practitioners in all 50 U.S. states and 90 countries, is free for download in Spanish, French and other languages. The guide, as well as an [FAQ](#) with sample materials and learnings from completed projects, are both available on AsphaltArt.bloomberg.org. The guide was produced by the Bloomberg Associates Transportation and Cultural Assets Management teams in collaboration with urban planning and architecture firm Street Plans Collaborative and public art consultant Renee Piechocki.

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Videos and photos for media use:

Videos and photos along with credits and descriptions can be downloaded [here](#).

Press release translations:

For translations of this press release in Spanish and French, click [here](#).

About Bloomberg Philanthropies:

Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg’s giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a pro bono consultancy that works in cities around the world. In 2022, Bloomberg

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About Bloomberg Associates:

Bloomberg Associates is the philanthropic consulting arm of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable organization, Bloomberg Philanthropies. Founded in 2014, we work side by side with client cities to improve the quality of life for residents, taking a strategic, collaborative and results-oriented approach to making cities stronger, safer, more equitable and efficient. Our team of globally recognized experts and industry leaders has worked with cities across the globe on hundreds of projects in order to ignite change and transform dynamic vision into reality. For more information on the consultancy, please visit www.bloombergassociates.org or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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