



FALL RIVER
MASSACHUSETTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Olivia Peixoto
(508) 324-2600

Asphalt Art Initiative Grant Award

(FALL RIVER, MA – DECEMBER 7, 2023) - Mayor Paul Coogan is thrilled to announce that Bloomberg Philanthropies has selected the City of Fall River as a recipient of an Asphalt Art Initiative grant in the amount of \$25,000. This unique program supports projects that use visual art and design to improve public safety, revitalize public spaces, and engage residents.

The City of Fall River is one of 25 grant recipients selected from more than 200 applications from cities across Canada, Mexico, and the United States. **As the result of this grant, a stunning mural will be painted on the pavement at the intersection of Broadway and Bradford Avenue.** This mural, which will be installed sometime in the early fall season of 2024, will be strategically designed to enhance pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist safety and to promote meaningful community engagement near our historic Kennedy Park.

This project is not just about art; it comes as a response to the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) identifying the Broadway and Bradford Avenue intersection as among the top 100 most dangerous intersections in Southeastern Massachusetts. The mural's primary objective is to elevate safety measures by heightening driver consciousness, improving crosswalk visibility, and placing a stronger emphasis on pedestrian safety.

Professional muralist Lena "Mac" McCarthy is a Boston-based artist who has been selected to bring this mural to life. She has deep personal and familial ties to Fall River and has been chosen due to her exceptional portfolio and extensive experience in creating murals. Her work spans across notable cities such as Boston, Miami, Los Angeles, and many other cities across Central and South America, including Akumal, Mexico and Bogota, Colombia.

Primary responsibility over project management and oversight will be held by Fall River Arts and Culture Coalition (FRACC) Executive Director, Ashley Occhino, who has successfully managed the installation of multiple murals during her career. Occhino will work closely with the Fall River Department of Engineering, which includes the Traffic and Parking Division, and the Fall River Department of Community Maintenance, which includes the Street and Highways Division.

Community members will also have a chance to participate in various stages of the mural's creation, as there will be an open call for local artists to engage with the project as assistants, fostering a collaborative atmosphere. Community members will also have a chance to participate in surveys to assess the public perception regarding the intersection's safety.

This mural signifies a step towards fostering community pride and safety that will be an important addition to the City of Fall River. For any further questions, please contact Mayor Paul Coogan's Office at (508) 324-2600.

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 Philanthropies distributed \$1.7 billion. For more information, please visit [bloomberg.org](https://www.bloomberg.org), sign up for our [newsletter](#), or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).