

Art Cycle Route #ArtCycleRoute

by Lisa Tierney, Crescent Heights Neighbourhood Connector

17 whimsical, colourful, Canadian animals can be found cycling along the 8th Avenue bike route from 2nd Street NW to 6th Street NE. Three nature-themed corner sidewalks at the 8th Avenue intersections of Centre Street, Edmonton Trail, and 6th Street NE complete the art cycle route!

This summer, we embarked on a major painting project in collaboration with the Renfrew Community Association. This was a pilot project and so was the very first of its kind in Calgary!! Hats off to our dedicated Engagement Director, Sandra Neill, for her perseverance in creating this and getting it approved! Of course, without the funding and support from Federation of Calgary Communities' Activate YYC grant, and Calgary Parking Authority sponsorship this would not have happened. Artist Yiting Hui was incredible! She is both an amazing artist and a fantastic person. Weekend after weekend, her and husband Clement showed up with all the paint and all the enthusiasm. It was contagious! I fell in love with each design. I even brought some home! She has designed both stickers and tote bags showcasing some of the 8th Avenue animals.

Over the span of the project more than 100 community members lent a hand. We had an incredible number of artists (with paint brush in hand, we all became artists, even if for just an hour or two). Some neighbours along the route let us borrow their power washer's and water, some brought out drinks and treats, and many stopped by to offer some Crescent Heights cheer!

Each time I walk, ride, or drive by one of the animals or street corners, I smile. I have snapshot moments of remembering our painting days. Together we beautified the streets, increased safety, and built community connection.

A highlight for me happened before we even picked up a paint brush. I went door to door along 8th Avenue to let people know that we would be painting on their street and to see if they wanted to join in. I met so many great neighbours through this experience. One of them was Amy. I knocked on her door and she then asked if she could join me in door knocking. So, off we went meeting the people on her block. We had great conversations with a number of neighbours on her road. There was even talk about a block party for next year. This inspires me so much. This is the heart of neighbouring. There was Kathy who introduced me to her family and let me see the renovations in her home. She too owns one of the century plus homes in the community. Sisters, Jerry and Cyndi, who live on opposite

sides of Centre Street, were instrumental in helping with the project. Now, I look forward to a chat each time I see them. I have more stories like this, and it has brought me to fall in love with door knocking. Who would have thought? Not!! It's true and so, I have kept with it! Just last week I met Matt who has some awesome ideas on community events and Brooklea who wants to work with me on creating a neighbours skill sharing library.

I can tell you this is one amazing neighbourhood filled with inspiring, kind, generous, and engaged people. I hope to meet you on one of my walks, but no need to wait for a door knock either! Contact me at lisa@crescentheightsyy.ca or 403-978-7443 if you would like to join me for door knocking or want to get involved in the neighbourhood.

If you take a photo of these beautiful artworks, please tag us @chcayyc @YitingCreatives #ArtCycleRoute on Instagram and Facebook.



Artist Yiting Hui and her husband Clement along with Crescent Heights neighbour Jerry



Stickers



Yiting and some helpers



1 of 4 paintings at the intersection of Centre St and 8th Ave