



An Arts and Cultural Plan for the Town of Salisbury

**Generated by the
Salisbury Cultural Council
Arts and Cultural Initiative**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview and Vision	1
Arts and Cultural Initiative Committee	2
Survey and Community Engagement	2
Goals, Strategies, Potential Program Areas	3
Summary of Survey Outcomes	6
Conclusion	7

OVERVIEW

Established through the Salisbury Cultural Council (SCC), the Arts and Cultural Initiative (Initiative) was formed in October 2021 to develop a draft Arts and Cultural Plan for advancing the arts, culture, and creative economy for inclusion in the 2022 Salisbury Master Plan. An Arts and Culture Advisory Committee will be formed to further refine and implement this draft of an Arts and Cultural Plan with the Town of Salisbury and other stakeholders.

The Salisbury Arts and Cultural Plan will:

- Build visibility and support for public art, artists, and cultural groups in Salisbury
- Enrich and invigorate the cultural life and community pride
- Support Salisbury's visitor economy and destination tourism
- Enhance Salisbury's public spaces and gathering places

The Initiative distributed a survey and held an open public meeting to identify community priorities to design an Arts and Cultural Plan.

Five focus areas have been identified through this process:

1. Public Art and Community Culture
2. Historic Sites and Buildings
3. Public Gathering and Open Space
4. Natural Resources and Recreation
5. Marketing and Communication

VISION

Salisbury has the potential to be a year-round destination for the arts and other unique cultural experiences. We believe that public art and cultural experiences should be abundant, available, and accessible to people of all ages in our community.

We recognize the vital role of the arts and culture in our community. They can invigorate and energize by building community, supporting economic growth, and attracting visitors from surrounding areas.

We strongly advocate for partnerships among local established private and public organizations to support and advance our vision. Fostering and promoting partnerships will help develop and maintain a long term-commitment to arts and culture in Salisbury.

ARTS AND CULTURAL INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

Donna Abdulla, Board of Selectmen
Katie Beal, Boys & Girls Club of Lower Merrimack Valley-Salisbury
Drew Dana, Zoning Board of Appeals
Kathleen Gilday, Salisbury Cultural Council
Donna M. Keefe, Salisbury Cultural Council
Melissa Lioz, Community Member
Grace Marchese, Artist, Studio 50
Lou Masiello, Planning Board
Lisa Pearson, Director, Planning and Development
Jennifer Roketenetz, Parks, Recreation, and Community Events
Shelley Rossitto, Community Member

SURVEY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Initiative collected 384 surveys between March 7 and May 13, 2022. Surveys were distributed electronically to the Boys and Girls Club, Salisbury PTA, Chamber of Commerce, Salisbury Beach Betterment Association, Salisbury Community TV, Salisbury Beach Partnership, Salisbury Citizens for Change, Keller Williams Realtor, and numerous Salisbury Facebook groups. In addition, hard copies were available at the Salisbury Public Library, Salisbury Senior Center, and Salisbury Town Hall.

The survey respondents represented a cross-section of the community. Respondents anonymously answered 12 survey questions and had the opportunity to reply to two additional open-ended questions.

The major themes identified by the Initiative are reflected in the following **Goals, Strategies,** and **Potential Program Areas.**

GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND POTENTIAL PROGRAM AREAS

1. PUBLIC ART AND COMMUNITY CULTURE

GOALS

- Integration of public art into existing and future public spaces
- Public programs and events inclusive of all community members
- Economic and workforce opportunities for artists and creative groups

STRATEGIES

- Create a public art and cultural advisory committee led by a part-time arts & culture staff person to work within the Planning and Development Department
- Conduct asset-mapping of Salisbury's public art, artists, organizations, and cultural groups
- Establish a public art policy that integrates public art and cultural programs into planning and community development for increasing and attracting economic development, tourism, new businesses
- Actively integrate arts and culture into future planning and community development that answers to the needs and interests of the community
- Support arts and culture networks and organizations in developing partnerships with local businesses
- Participate in statewide and regional efforts to bring grant opportunities and other resources to Salisbury's cultural community
- Support the expansion of spaces for cultural activities and events with a commitment to developing creative enterprises, affordable artist spaces, and performance and exhibition spaces

POTENTIAL PROGRAM AREAS

- Beach and Salisbury Square activities for winter and shoulder seasons
- Monthly, year-round art programs that are low cost or free to various age groups at the library or other accessible community venues off-season and in Salisbury Square and the Beach Center during the summer season
- Locally-themed sculpture commissioned for public spaces (ex: Haverhill's shoes, Hershey's Kisses, New Orleans' streetcars)
- Annual art project/contest reflecting Salisbury's history, culture, and/or awareness of current issues impacting the town's environment
- Free, year-round music and dance playgroups and arts and crafts programs for children and toddlers
- Annual food festival highlighting local restaurants

2. HISTORIC SITES AND BUILDINGS

GOALS

- Enhanced awareness of Salisbury's historic sites and buildings as part of its community culture
- Preservation and restoration of important historical sites

STRATEGIES

- Form a working alliance of the Salisbury Historical Commission, Planning and Development Department, Conservation Commission, and other stakeholders to implement relevant portions of the Arts and Cultural Plan.

POTENTIAL PROGRAM AREAS

- Reenactments of significant historical events
- Self-guided historical tour of Salisbury for print and electronic distribution about historical sites and buildings, public art, and include private art installations visible from public roadways and public spaces
- Restoration of Ring's Island Meeting House
- Seasonal community events at historical sites promoting the history and culture of Salisbury
- Photographic display of historic Salisbury installed in a select public building and as a touring exhibition
- New historical markers at points of interest with consistent signage identifying Salisbury's history
- Salisbury genealogy classes
- Historical and cultural educational opportunities with the Salisbury Historical Society and the Salisbury Public Library

3. PUBLIC GATHERING AND OPEN SPACE

GOALS

- Stewardship of public lands for community use
- Revitalization of the Beach Center and waterfront
- Improvement of public spaces to attract business development and year-round enjoyment by residents and visitors

STRATEGIES

- Form a working alliance of stakeholders to implement relevant portions of the Arts and Cultural Plan
- Build connections to all public areas across Salisbury to increase social interaction and neighborhood connections, including the Rail Trail,

- Lions Park and other sporting fields, dog park, historical sites, the Beach Center, Salisbury Square, and public art installations
- Support creative projects that enhance Salisbury's unique public gathering places

POTENTIAL PROGRAM AREAS

- Activating Salisbury Square with a variety of unique businesses such as cafes, boutiques, and specialty stores, and utilizing the area for art, music, and cultural events
- Creating open spaces for public markets, public gatherings, and events
- Securing public and private funding for the renovation of the second floor of the Memorial School shared with the Boys and Girls Club of Lower Merrimack Valley-Salisbury into a mixed-use cultural center with performance and exhibition spaces, artist studios and creative innovators, and short-term rental spaces for public and private events

4. NATURAL RESOURCES/RECREATION

GOALS

- Support and preserve Salisbury's natural resources as an important part of its community culture

STRATEGIES

- Collaborate with the Conservation Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning and Development Department, and other stakeholders in relevant activities and programs, including environmental awareness, weeding, trash pick up, and beautification
- Raise awareness of Salisbury's environment and climate change through arts and culture initiatives

POTENTIAL PROGRAM AREAS

- Support and promote efforts for community cleanups of the beach, parks, bike paths, and other recreational sites across town
- Create an "Adopt a Spot," a program where local businesses can plant and care for a nearby lot/intersection with a sign recognizing their contribution.

5. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

GOALS

- Development of a unique brand for Salisbury's identity in its public communications
- Maintain a coordinated communications plan to promote Salisbury events, activities, and programs for residents and tourism

STRATEGIES

- Create an online presence on the town website home page showing activities and events for Salisbury residents and visitors with a consolidated weekly or monthly listing of programs and activities
- Increase promotion of all events, programs, and activities, including those at public and private venues, at the new visitor and welcome center
- Institute an electronic newsletter focusing on "What's Happening this Week in Salisbury" for residents, tourists, summer rentals, and day visitors distributed to rental owners, businesses, and residents in a central location
- Create a mechanism for individuals, community groups, and organizations to support and participate in ongoing programs or events, such as park clean-up, trail maintenance, special events, etc.

SUMMARY of SURVEY OUTCOMES

PLACES AND EVENTS PEOPLE FREQUENT THE MOST

Beach Center	Library Library	Salisbury Reservation	Rail Trail
Rings Island	Black Rock Beacon	July 4 th celebration	Sea Festival of Trees
Farmer's Market	Salisbury Days	Art Stroll	Live music in the Beach Center

WHAT PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEE

Live Music	Live Theater	Festivals/Fairs	
Art Galleries	Outdoor Performances	Sand Sculpture	Chowder Contest

Farmers Market in Salisbury Square or Beach Center	Nice hotel in the Beach Center	More planters and flowers	Cleanup of Salisbury Square, Beach Center, Lions Park, resolve abandoned buildings, etc.
Spring and Fall Activities	Local dance on stage	High School art show	Massage, yoga, meditation on the beach
Silent fireworks	Snowman building in common	Painting electrical boxes and other public art	Portable green head trap contest
Walk/bike/run	Tours and Lectures: fishing, amusement industry, whaling, shipwrecks	Historical Reenactments	Self-guided and walking historical tours
Pike School Tours and History	More businesses in Town Square and the Beach Center	Town map with places of interest	Opportunities for cultural and artistic activities

SUGGESTED MARKETING STRATEGIES

Flyers, flyers, flyers	Social Media	Website	Summer rentals
Local newspapers	Posters	Advertising posters	Consolidated area for marketing
Monthly Newsletter	Coordinated promotion		

CONCLUSION

The response to our questionnaire indicated substantial energy and interest in the arts and culture of our community, impacting the future of Salisbury to work collectively in a mutually beneficial approach with private and public entities and community members. There are many active and engaged individuals, organizations, public officials, and business leaders with the imagination and vision to create a vibrant Town of Salisbury that celebrates the people and its history with a renewed sense of pride, determination, and revitalization.

The Arts and Cultural Initiative believes that a community-created Arts and Cultural Plan will benefit the Town of Salisbury in future planning and development for public art, cultural experiences, improvements to the town's visual appearance, and opportunities for residents, businesses, and tourism in our community to thrive.

This report was produced by the Salisbury Cultural Council Arts and Cultural Initiative Committee with the support of Karen Ristuben, Program Director, Essex County Community Foundation Creative County, and Tom Borup, Ph.D., Creative Community Builders, Minneapolis, MN.