



DUPONT TREE PLAZA

Building a New Community Green Space in the Heart of Dupont Circle.

PROJECT GOALS

Restore Mass Ave (RMA), a nonprofit group, plans to install shade trees and make sidewalk improvements at DuPont Tree Plaza in Washington, D.C. The project, currently in the design phase, will meet the District of Columbia’s requirements for a new stormwater installation in a public space. RMA’s larger goal is to restore the historic landscape of Massachusetts Avenue—double rows of shade trees lining each sidewalk. So far, tree canopy along this route has increased 13% in RMA’s first 10 years of effort. The project aims to provide residents, workers and visitors with a new sense of community as they enjoy the shade and learn about the site’s historic importance.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Shady and inviting green spaces for the public, drawing in more foot traffic to the nearby businesses.
- Trees shade and cool thousands of pedestrians and users of the bike stations at the site.
- Community support is built through active engagement in the planning and design process.
- Local students visit the site and participate in a classroom project to learn about green infrastructure.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Trees cool and clean the air, improving public health.
- An underground reservoir will filter stormwater and nourish trees and plants. Less runoff will enter the city’s combined sewer system and local waterways.
- The tall leaf crowns of native trees and connected ground plantings create a new wildlife corridor.
- Reducing sediment and stormwater runoff improves water quality.

CONSERVATION PROJECTS INSTALLED

- Adding tall native trees and ground plants to create a new wildlife habitat.
- Installing an underground reservoir to infiltrate stormwater and update DC’s old infrastructure.
- Creating bioretention areas to reduce stormwater runoff and control flooding.



Photo: Bob Cullen

“The Chesapeake Bay Trust Green Streets, Green Jobs Green Towns (G3) grant was the catalyst enabling us to get a buildable design. The G3 program’s focus on social inclusion and education made our project better.”

- Deborah Shapley

Founder & President, Restore Mass Ave

PROJECT SUMMARY

The volunteer-led RMA is working to restore the historic landscape of Embassy Row, including the Dupont Circle area in downtown Washington, D.C. The Dupont Tree Plaza project will benefit residents and the area's many daily visitors, including:

- The approximately 1,000 pedestrians crossing the plaza.
- The 20,000 people using the nearby Metrorail station.
- The drivers of 25,000 vehicles passing through.
- People using nine nearby Metrobus lines.
- Riders using the busy Capital Bikeshare stand.

The Dupont Tree Plaza design plan emphasizes creating shade, connecting to the community and building environmental resilience. Signage will describe the history of Massachusetts Avenue and its renewal as a sustainable street in the 21st century.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- District agencies are set up to create large municipal projects, not small projects that improve orphan sites in public spaces.
- Existing users (e.g., Capital BikeShare, FreshFarm Market) already claim parts of the space. Project planners must negotiate how the space can best serve everyone.
- Project planners are getting commitments to ensure ongoing maintenance after installation.

THE PARTNERS AND FUNDING SOURCES

- Restore Mass Ave
- Urban Forestry Division, District Department of Transportation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- City of Baltimore
- Chesapeake Bay Program
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- G3 Forum Partnership
- Chesapeake Bay Trust
- Design Green, LLC
- Huska Consulting, LLC
- Lotus Design + Consulting, LLC
- David Wooden Studio

CONTACTS

- 👤 Deborah Shapley - President & CEO, Restore Mass Ave
- ✉️ restoremassave@gmail.com
- 📷 @RestoreMassAve



Native trees will be planted to provide shade for residents and all who pass through Dupont Circle. (Photo: Carlin Stiehl, Chesapeake Bay Program)



Rows of trees will shade the Capital Bikeshare station where locals and tourists can rent bikes. (Photo: Carlin Stiehl, Chesapeake Bay Program)



A vision of Dupont Tree Plaza shows rows of trees, bioretention infrastructure, bikes and pedestrian activity. (Image: David Wooden/Restore Mass Ave)

