

MAY 2021

BUP dates

Greetings from our team at Bethesda Urban Partnership!



Bethesda is in bloom and beckoning us to soak in the spring air, enjoy the vibrant colors and head to the nearest park or patio. Bethesda Urban Partnership proudly manages and maintains Bethesda's grounds. The team is pleased to bring fresh, seasonal plantings to the downtown and keep our surroundings well-manicured and welcoming. Matt Flack, BUP's Field Operations Manager, provided some insights into the planning behind the plantings.



URBAN PARTNERSHIP INC.

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What is the process behind designing Bethesda's flowerbeds and planters, and deciding which plants will be featured each season?

When designing a landscape, my main goal is to improve the local ecosystem while still creating aesthetically pleasing beds and planters everyone can enjoy. One of our goals is to steadily increase native plant populations. Last year the team planted over 1,500 native varieties and cultivars throughout Downtown Bethesda. Beyond the showy, flowering perennials, I also make sure to add species that provide forage and shelter for native pollinators and beneficial fauna.

We still use annuals in the planters, but we try to supplement each one with at least one species that is edible. Normally these are featured as the center of the planter, such as lavender and rosemary. Showcasing plants that have a use and value, beyond aesthetics, is an excellent way to create a sense of stewardship. It's encouraging to see the number of people who responsibly harvest the edibles throughout the year. By utilizing plant material that returns yearly we are saving money, reducing inputs and emphasizing the importance of horticulture.

There is one rule when designing the planters: right plant, right place. It's important to consider the intricacies of the urban environment, which includes variables such as heat islands, reflected sunlight, pedestrian traffic and idling vehicles. Embracing the variable nature of an urban ecosystem can provide an opportunity to create diverse and interesting plantings and also bolster the biodiversity of the local ecosystem.

Selecting the right colors and plant material help us to create a sense of place throughout the downtown. We try new combinations yearly while also maintaining a common thread throughout the different landscapes.

What is the team's environmental approach to landscaping in Bethesda?

Our goal is to improve our local ecosystem. For the last five years we have worked to decrease excessive fertilizer applications, eliminate the use of synthetic herbicides, and focus on proper plant placement within the various microclimates of our downtown to minimize input needed to maintain the aesthetic standard that BUP has set.

Overall, we want the impact of our landscaping program to be beneficial for both the local ecosystem and the local community. By showcasing local natives and incorporating edible plants, we are striving to cultivate stewardship for the local environment while still making Bethesda beautiful.



Have you always had a passion for landscape design and horticulture?

Following in my grandfather's footsteps, I have been gardening for most of my life. During college I worked at a research farm for the USDA at the National Plant Material Center. While working there I participated in many full-circle projects for a variety of ecosystems. The experience I gained was invaluable and it further highlighted for me the interconnected nature of our natural world. Later, during my time as the Horticulturist at George Washington University, I became fascinated with utilizing "micro-climates" to our advantage in urban environments and integrated urban infrastructure into the planting process.



The BUP landscaping crew is always hard at work around town. What are the team's goals for beautifying Bethesda?



The flourishing flowerbeds, freshly trimmed landscapes and sprouting planters would not be possible without the dedicated and hardworking BUP crew. We have been steadily working on our goals to make the city as beautiful and unique, as it is environmentally beneficial. It has been personally rewarding to utilize my broad spectrum of horticultural experience to bolster the local ecosystem while working alongside a devoted team with keen attention to detail. We have accomplished many of our goals, but the best is yet to come!



Bike to Work Day – Friday, May 21

Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) is excited to announce that Bike to Work Day, an annual event that encourages exercise, pollution reduction, cost savings and more, returns on Friday, May 21.

Pre-register today to participate. FREE Bike to Work Day T-shirts will be given out at local bicycle shops. Select your preferred pick-up location at registration and bike to the shop on May 21 to receive your shirt. Working from home? You're still eligible to participate. Plan for a ride to celebrate!

Do you have questions about bike routes, bike parking or safety tips? BTS has helpful bicycling information available at www.BethesdaTransit.org.

For more information or inquiries, contact [Kristen Blackmon](#).

JUNE 3- 26, 2021

Gallery B: 7700 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite E
Exhibition Hours: Thurs. – Sat., 12pm-5pm

Bethesda Painting Awards

The Bethesda Painting Awards is a Trawick arts initiative.



Amy Boone-McCreesh
Marybeth Chew
Khanh Le
Megan Lewis
Meghan Marlatt
Scott Ponemone
Edmond Praybe
Ryan Syrell

DINE OUT AT THE STREETERY!



Open Daily

Norfolk Avenue, between
St. Elmo and Cordell Avenues

Woodmont Avenue, between
Elm Street and Bethesda Avenue

Open Friday – Sunday

Norfolk Avenue, between
Cordell and Del Ray Avenues

Open Fridays & Saturdays, 6-10pm

Cordell Avenue

Live music on Fridays:

May 14: Juliet Lloyd

May 21: Eric Scott

May 28: Sara Jones