

BUPdates

GREETINGS FROM THE TEAM AT BETHESDA URBAN PARTNERSHIP!



Fall is right around the corner, which means our landscaping and maintenance team will be hard at work turning over the median landscapes and planters that help make Bethesda beautiful, and our marketing & events team is getting ready for our annual food and music festival, Taste of Bethesda, which is set to return Saturday, October 5. The combination of beautiful places and crowd-pleasing events is part of what makes Bethesda such a desirable and unique destination. We also have to give recognition to our businesses; the best part of Taste of Bethesda is being able to highlight many of our 180+ restaurants that call Bethesda their home. Read on to learn more about the integral work of our Landscaping & Maintenance Team, and for a sneak peek at the 2024 Taste of Bethesda.



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During our special events, it's very common for someone to approach us and ask, "What is the Bethesda Urban Partnership?" As we start describing the work we do – marketing downtown Bethesda, producing festivals such as Taste of Bethesda, managing the Circulator shuttle bus, and promoting Bethesda's restaurants and shops, – it's almost always our mention of the Landscaping and Maintenance Team that gets the big reaction. "Oh!" they'll often exclaim with a smile. "The guys in the red shirts? They're great! I always see them around town, working hard!"

And it's true. Our team of "red shirts" are some of the hardest working people in the area, and in this issue we're taking some time to learn what they do to support downtown Bethesda and the Bethesda Urban Partnership. Susanna Parker, Marketing and Communications Manager for BUP, sat down with Eli Banks, Field Operations Manager, to chat about the team and all the ways they work to make Bethesda beautiful. Starting, of course, with the landscaping.

Eli, one of the things we love about downtown Bethesda is our beautiful landscaping and plantings. How do you choose what to plant, and how do you make sure it can survive the weather extremes we sometimes get?

Until recently, BUP mostly stuck to the standard ornamental plants that most downtowns use, but we've started switching over to more native species, and wildflowers. Especially in the road medians, like along Wisconsin Avenue, where we've seeded a variety of native wildflower species, we've noticed that they're holding up better than some of more delicate ornamentals we've used in the past. So not only do they need less water, the native wildflowers withstand high temperatures better, and require less maintenance.

And what about the other landscaping, and planters?

Our Supervisor of Maintenance, Jose Castro, is actually the one who does the landscape design. He has a vision of what he wants an area or a planter to look like, and makes it happen! He makes sure each planting has a variety of color and height for visual appeal, and some planters even have edible species like rosemary. Since some plants do die off during the winter,



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we try to plant some hardy species like geraniums and winter cabbage to keep a bit of color going even in cold weather.

Besides the landscaping, what other work does the maintenance team do? What does a typical week look like?

There really is no typical week, every week brings something different. But I would say that about 30-40% of the work our team does is trash removal. Between downtown Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Wheaton [where BUP does trash removal via contract with Montgomery County], our team touches more than 500 trashcans and recycling bins per day. But there's other work, too: our team does sidewalk repair, fountain maintenance at Veterans Park, event set-up for BUP events, tree trimming, tree removal as needed, and set-up and take-down of holiday décor. And the team does work for the Arts & Entertainment District as well. In between artists at Gallery B, the team goes in to paint the walls and the floor, patch any holes left by the previous artwork, help the new artists hang their artwork, and more. They do the same thing for Triangle Art Studios on Old Georgetown Old and Studio B on Wisconsin Avenue.

Now let's talk about the other "guys in red shirts" – our Ask Me Team. They're our BUP ambassadors, can you tell me more about their day-to-day work?



Well, besides event set-up and take-down, their biggest task is putting a face to Bethesda and Bethesda Urban Partnership. During their workdays, they regularly talk to people, answering questions about us and Bethesda, giving directions, that sort of thing. John [Mattingly, Supervisor of the ASK ME! Ambassadors] told me that the team has about 700 individual contacts with people per month. They

also keep things running on the weekends – they do the Sunday trash removal, report and document any issues like sidewalk bricks or road signs that need to be repaired, and they assist with any incidents in the downtown, including helping the police with traffic control.

So they keep pretty busy, too!

Yeah, they really do. If people take away one thing from this, it should be that both the maintenance team and the Ask Me Team work really hard, all to make Bethesda a better place.



Taste of Bethesda 2024

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5
11AM TO 4PM**



Mark your calendars – **Taste of Bethesda** is returning on **Saturday, October 5th**. This popular street festival highlights downtown Bethesda restaurants, offers live entertainment on multiple stages, and has children's activities like face painting! We're a little over a month out from the 2024 festival and are excited to give you a preview of what's in store for this year's event.

Food-wise, you can expect to try dishes in a variety of cuisines from downtown Bethesda's delicious and diverse eateries. New participants include ala Bethesda, Q by Peter Chang, Rooted 3, and more. And, some returning favorites include Medium Rare, Silver, Kusshi, The Red Bandana Bakery and many more to please your palate.

For entertainment, there will be eight bands performing on four stages throughout the festival including Black Masala and La Unica, and a few new-to-us groups including Eastern Standard Time and Cole Larravide.

We'll share more sneak peeks as we get closer to Taste, so be sure to sign up for our newsletter and follow us on social media!



YAPPY HOUR & POP-UP DOG PARK

Thursday September 19, 6-8PM

Thursday, October 10, 5-7PM

Elm Street Park, 4600 Elm Street

The Trawick Prize | Bethesda Contemporary Art Awards

EXHIBITION: SEPTEMBER 5-29
Opening Reception: Friday, September 13 • 6-8PM
Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave, Suite E



free SUMMER CONCERTS

Fridays, 6-8PM
Corner of Norfolk & St. Elmo Avenues

Sept. 6: Kentucky Avenue
Sept. 13: Miss Monster
Sept. 20: Jill Fulton Band

