

# Metropolitan Grants Program



## *Washington, D.C. — Metropolitan Branch Trail Year Two — 2010*

### **Washington Area Bicyclist Association Community Support Grant: \$5,000 Award**

The mission of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) is to create a healthy, more livable region by promoting bicycling for fun, fitness and affordable transportation; advocating for better bicycling conditions and transportation choices for a healthier environment, and educating children, adults and motorists about safe bicycling. WABA has been one of the region's [leading advocates](#) for the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT).

### **Casey Trees Metropolitan Branch Trail Beautification Program**

#### **Project Support Grant: \$18,000 Award**

Casey Trees, with its headquarters blocks from the Metropolitan Branch Trail, has had a longstanding commitment to increasing and caring for D.C.'s tree canopy. The organization's proximity to the trail, ability to foster community stewardship, and innovative [Water By-Cycle program](#) make it a valuable partner for improving the beauty and quality of the MBT. The trail beautification program through community tree plantings includes participation in the [Meet the Met](#) trail grand-opening event on June 5, 2010, where staff representatives were available to demonstrate proper care for trees already planted on the MBT. Casey Trees will also implement community tree planting events for 25 to 30 trees on the trail in late 2010 and early 2011, with possible tree plantings on neighborhood streets directly adjacent or connecting to the trail. These plantings will be coordinated with the garden at DC Prep charter school and trail improvements by the D.C. Building Industry Association. All trees planted by Casey Trees will be included in the organization's summer tree care schedule and will be tended by Casey Trees Summer Crew and Water By-Cycle programs. Watering and care will be provided for two summer seasons for each tree planted. Existing trees on the MBT will be included in Casey Trees' tree care plan for summer 2011.



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## **Metropolitan Branch Trail Mural Program / Beacon House Project Support Grant: \$5,000 Award**

A large section of the newly constructed Met Branch Trail traverses through a light industrial area that experiences high incidence of illegal graffiti and property vandalism. In an effort to replace illegal



graffiti with artistic works and create a more welcoming trail environment, a mural program was created through the Metropolitan Grants Program. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy partnered with Beacon House and D.C.'s Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) to engage more than 20 youth and three local artists in the transformation of a graffiti-covered traiside building into a large-scale vibrant work of art. The \$5,000 award supported a six-week program that guided youth through the design and creation process while teaching application of aerosol and acrylic paint. The colorful community

treasure depicts a lush natural environment, creating a beautiful tropical oasis for trail users and community members to enjoy. This program inspired another mural on the trail, establishing the corridor as a venue for public art.

## **Eckington Metropolitan Branch Trail Neighborhood Signage Program Project Support Grant: \$2,000 Award**

Funded by the Metropolitan Grants Program, the Metropolitan Branch Trail Signage Program clearly routes users through preferred low-volume roadways, adds visibility and creates awareness of the entire trail system throughout several neighborhoods. Through RTC's partnership with the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), approximately 100 wayfinding signs were added to the trail route in 2009. In addition, a neighborhood identity signage pilot project is underway in D.C.'s Eckington neighborhood, chosen because of its proximity to the trail and multiple access points from residential streets. Approximately 50 signs will incorporate historical and cultural elements of the neighborhood and showcase the trail as a new part of the community. Signs will direct local residents and visitors through the neighborhood to safely access the trail at multiple locations. The design will be adapted from the *Metropolitan Branch Trail Artist Created Identity*, a project of the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities. Based on community feedback, the design will be finalized and installed in fall 2010.



### *Photo credits:*

*Tree care: Barbara Richey/Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*

*Mural: Heather Deutsch/D.C. Department of Transportation*

*Eckington sign concept: BLANK, Inc.*