



MARP Final Plans Comments & Concerns

Massachusetts Avenue NW Rehabilitation Project (MARP)

These comments are summarized in Our Takeaway at <https://RestoreMassAve.org/marp/>

TREES

- **Species** New trees are consistent with RMA program to re-create historic character and views.
- **Gains and Losses** Planned losses = 34. New trees = 45. Net new trees = 11. Quantities: present = 191. End of project = 202. † * **Canopy change** DDOT said that after 20 years, canopy from these street trees would be 60% of present canopy area. † *
- **Special & Heritage Trees**** The final plan keeps several majestic trees next to curbs. But others are beyond the Work Limit between sidewalk and building lines. **RMA remains concerned that the iconic streetscape formed by these very large trees will be compromised.**
- **Unplanned losses:** The health and longevity of mature trees may be shortened by construction activity. MARP plans do not include second row trees and other trees adjoining the Work Area which could also be impacted. The RMA Assessment will use GIS satellite data to track canopy change.

SIDEWALKS, SURFACES

- **Porous surface** Between trees will be cobblestone or turf. Some present tree boxes will be larger.
- **Flexi-pave**® The sidewalk for long stretches by large trees will be Flexi-pave ® which is made from recycled tires and cleanses water passing through.
- **Sidewalk** The plans do not show "heaving" where roots of mature trees are above grade. Once such roots are cut to install a flat sidewalk, trees could die. At heaving sites, the grade should be raised, roots should be untouched and given good soil. * **A UFD arborist will be on call for specific situations.**

SUBSURFACE AROUND TREE ROOTS

- **Structural Soils** Plans show many present trees and new ones to have 1,500 cu. ft. of CU-structural soil in their rooting space. This is recommended to aid growth.
- **Excavation** Workers will excavate around all street trees' root systems for this job. Digging will also find roots of trees beyond the Work Area. DC regulations requires vacuuming or hand digging around any roots >2". We recommend air-spading around large root systems.*
- **Storm drains** The 2017 MARP plans showed dozens of new Catch Basins (CB). But each new CB removes a large volume of rooting soil needed by trees. In 2019 DDOT said revised plans had "reduced" 13 inlets and "relocated" 7. The final plan is better, but a few CBs require excavation near established trees.†

LIGHTS

- **Black DC Globe** light poles, 16' tall, will replace present 28.5' high steel "cobra heads." They'll be spaced evenly between trees. This likely means less carving out of tree leaf crowns to let light through.
- **Light poles away from trees** to minimize carve outs of tree crowns. DDOT said 9 poles were moved in the 90% plan. We suggested moving 6 more but the final plan does not show any change.

HISTORIC CHARACTER

- **LED streetlights** to be 3,000 K. Follow up if DDOT lights policy allows 2,700K at time of installation.
- **Main sidewalk paving** Standard DC cement will be throughout. We recommend "exposed aggregate."
- **Rose parks in medians east and west of Sheridan Circle.** These will have sidewalk crossings and new ground cover. The present roses are popular and locally maintained; we recommend red roses there.

* DDOT to provide final counts (2/23).

† DDOT email to RMA about 90% plan of April 2018, sent August 2019.