



Growing a Healthier DC: Green “Green Jobs”



In a healthier D.C., jobs are green

Imagine a future DC where economic prosperity is driven by environmental transformation and where businesses providing environmentally-friendly products and services are the fastest growing segment of the economy. Imagine a vibrant local business sector building green roofs, restoring streams, and applying environmental building and site design to reduce pollution and energy use. For employees, new green jobs offer living wages and upward mobility across a broad spectrum of skill and education levels.¹ Training, certification and apprenticeship programs help residents develop the skills to be successful in the new green economy.



The green in the “green” economy

Landscape architects and designers. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that landscape architecture is the fastest growing design profession. Employment is projected to grow by 16 percent over the next 10 years.²

Arborist services. Tree and arborist companies have historically struggled to find qualified employees. There is a job in the tree care industry for every trained worker available, according to the Alliance for Community Trees.³

**Green jobs
simultaneously
create good jobs,
safer streets
and healthier
communities.**



Engineering, research and modeling. As green infrastructure alternatives are increasingly used to manage stormwater, improve air quality and reduce the urban heat island effect, jobs in engineering, research and modeling will be essential in the development, design and performance monitoring of green systems.

Grounds and garden maintenance. The DC region is home to countless agencies, institutions, universities, and nonprofit and corporate headquarters. These groups value having quality, well-maintained landscapes and hire staff or contract with outside services to maintain and upgrade their properties.



Specialized landscape installation and maintenance. The skills to install and maintain vegetated systems designed for their ecological function will increasingly be in demand as these systems replace tanks, filters and other forms of hard infrastructure.

Green roofs. Washington, DC is second only to Chicago in total area of green roofs.⁴ As this trend continues, job opportunities in design, installation and maintenance of green roof systems, as well as for plant production, will increase.





Landscaping alone is a \$40 billion industry and growing.

The Challenge and Opportunity

As rising energy and transportation costs bring more residents to cities, new technologies, policies and efforts to make communities more livable are changing the way we use trees and vegetation in urban environments. Landscape is increasingly recognized not just for beauty, but as a key part of our infrastructure. In Washington, DC a number of new policies will drive business opportunity and economic development in this sector.⁵

Focus on the Anacostia River will drive major restoration projects like wetlands and streambank reconstruction. Stricter stormwater regulations and fees will favor vegetative systems like green roofs and rain gardens to capture and filter stormwater onsite. The DC Green Building Act requirements offer opportunities for the use of vegetation to serve multiple roles in the point systems used to evaluate developments. As DC develops strategies to cut greenhouse gas emissions, our trees and vegetation, which reduce carbon dioxide, will be increasingly important. In addition, much of the District's infrastructure is aging, and there is strong momentum to incorporate green infrastructure as sites redevelop and our water and transportation systems are upgraded. These trends and regulations will create unprecedented demands for tree and landscape design, materials and services.

Recommendations

- Inform trade associations, business development and employment service providers about trends and regulations that will create demand for green jobs and services.
- Incorporate landscape jobs into magnet programs and vocational schools, job training, reintegration and local business development programs and services.
- Use public investments to leverage private dollars and jump start sectors of the green economy, such as green roof grant and incentive programs.
- Coordinate among city agencies, businesses, trade associations, universities, educators and nonprofit organizations to expand existing green job training, internship and apprentice programs.
- Use targeted investments, incentives and marketing to attract green companies to the District.

Green jobs can employ residents with a wide range of skill and education levels.

Green "Green Jobs" is one in a series of issue briefs from Casey Trees. The *Growing a Healthier DC* series is a product of conversations with a panel of national and local experts convened in cooperation with District agencies, organizations and foundations. The panel examined how green infrastructure could be used to maximize social, economic and ecological benefits in the District of Columbia.

Visit www.caseytrees.org for more information on the topic addressed in this brief or the complete series:

- Green City
- Green Neighborhoods
- Green Streets
- Green Parks and Open Space
- Green Schools
- Green Business Districts
- Green Parking Lots
- Green Residences
- Green Jobs

¹ *Green Collar Jobs in America's Cities: Building Pathways out of Poverty and Careers in the Clean Energy Economy*, Apollo Alliance and Green For All, 2008.

² *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2008-09 Edition*, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos039.htm>

³ *Adult Workforce Training National Webcast*, Alliance for Community Trees, March 20, 2008.

⁴ *Green Roof Industry Survey 2006*, Green Roofs for Healthy Cities, April 2007.

⁵ *DC Green Collar Jobs Initiative* by Bracken Hendricks and Benjamin Goldstein, Center for American Progress, Oct 5, 2007.