

# *Capital Trees Sponsorship and Volunteer Project*

Capital Trees is an urban greening organization which works with public and private partners to identify, create, environmentally restore and beautify public urban green spaces to improve and promote community. Capital Trees traces its roots to the advocacy, determination and dedication of members from James River, Boxwood, Three Chopt and Tuckahoe Garden Clubs as well as the Garden Club of Virginia.

Since Capital Trees' origin in 2010, its partners have included the City of Richmond, corporate citizens, local foundations and numerous generous individuals who together have invested more than \$2 million dollars in projects to restore, enhance and activate green spaces in Richmond's urban core.

The rehabilitation of 5.5 acres jointly owned by the City of Richmond and CSX has been and remains Capital Trees' signature and most significant project to date. In 2015, Capital Trees was granted permission to renovate and create an open green space on land adjacent to the James River and Kanawha Canal to create a linear park between the floodwall at 17th Street and Great Shiplock Park at Pear Street. This public land has important historic, environmental, social and economic attributes and sits within the footprint of the 2012 Richmond Riverfront Master Plan. It now serves as a riparian buffer using native trees, shrubs and perennials and includes storm water mitigation amenities. This project has had two phases, the Low Line Gardens, a horticultural restoration on three acres of the land which was completed in 2016; and the Low Line Green which will include continuation of the horticultural restoration of the Low Line Gardens, the addition of a larger plaza/outdoor classroom and significant further environmental remediation of the site.

Other Capital Tree projects include a streetscape renovation on the 14th Street corridor and the renovation of Great Shiplock Park in partnership with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. Capital Trees spearheads the funding for the design work using professional designers, engineers, landscape architects and professional installers. Of equal importance is a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Richmond that Capital Trees is responsible for maintaining all its projects on City-owned land ensuring the ongoing health and success of these projects. The James River Garden Club, in partnership with Boxwood, Three Chopt, and Tuckahoe Garden Clubs, continues to play an important role in supporting Capital Trees both financially and through the hands-on volunteer efforts of Club members.

