

2023 Impact 100 Richmond Grant Finalist
Program: The Hotchkiss Field and Community Center
Organization: Capital Trees

The Hotchkiss Field and Community Center Green Space Project will transform Hotchkiss Community Park (HCP) from a 1.88 acre dry, barren, closed off space with compacted soil into a welcoming, lush, oasis complete with a native pollinator garden, walking trails, lights, seating areas, and large trees that will provide restorative, shaded space for current and future generations to connect with nature and neighbors. The community around HCP houses the city's most vulnerable residents, many of whom are low-income and persons of color that suffer disproportionately from health challenges often exacerbated by the lack of equitable access to green space. Heat mapping confirms HCP is in a heat island; the area does not have enough foliage to offset heat waves, making it dangerously hot to residents. Impact 100 Richmond's \$100,000 investment will create sustainable, transformational change, elevating both the Capital Trees organization and HCP. Developing a new, urban green space will allow HCP visitors to actively reclaim their health by enjoying more outdoor athletic activities, which will improve the mental health and wellbeing of the community at large. As they mature, trees will produce cleaner air, restore Richmond's tree canopy, and provide cooler temperatures on the ground for residents to offset any potential negative health effects of the urban heat island effect (i.e., overheating, dehydration, heat stroke, and death). HCP was designed with residents' input and will be constructed and maintained for the first three years by Capital Trees. During this time, Capital Trees will host four community garden workdays annually to encourage residents to take a vested interest in this new, beautiful community space. After, Richmond's Parks and Recreation Dpt. has committed to further maintaining the grounds, ensuring the success and sustainability of Impact 100's generosity.