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Dita Beard Joins Elizabeth River Trail Foundation as Assistant Director

NORFOLK, Va. (March 9, 2020) The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation is pleased to announce that Dita Beard has been named the assistant director. She will support the organization through community outreach, volunteer coordination, marketing and events.

Beard grew up in Hampton Roads as a Navy dependent. She graduated from Old Dominion University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theater performance and from University of Virginia with a Master's in Urban and Environmental Planning and a graduate certificate in Urban Design. Her research focus was on community-engaged public design, nature in cities, and cultural and natural amenity-based economic development. She worked with multiple communities including the Venable Neighborhood Association and the Friendship Court public housing project in Charlottesville, VA, and the Cameron Foundation in Petersburg, VA.

"The enormous potential of the ERT to positively impact residents' and visitors' lives with expanded and equitable public access to Norfolk's green spaces and waterfront is truly inspiring," said Beard. "I'm really excited to help make the ERT the most iconic urban riverfront trail in the country."

"We are thrilled to have Dita on board as Assistant Director," said Cheryl White, ERT Foundation Executive Director. "We are beginning a period of unprecedented growth with major capital projects coming online in the next six months. Dita's skills and passion for community outreach and engagement will be invaluable as trail use grows."

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation's mission is to promote, enhance and transform the Elizabeth River Trail into the most iconic urban riverfront trail in the country. The ERT runs 10.5 miles and connects businesses, historic attractions and 28 neighborhoods within a five-minute walk. The multi-use trail is designed for walking, running and biking. It comprises 11 sections and 11 trailheads from Norfolk State University to NIT Terminals along the Elizabeth River. Highlights include Harbor Park, Downtown Norfolk, Freemason Historic District, Sentara campus, Fort Norfolk, Chelsea, West Ghent, Lambert's Point, Old Dominion University, Larchmont and Lochhaven. For more information, visit www.elizabethrivertrail.org.

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