

Trees in Richmond's Iron Triangle get much-needed maintenance

Mike Aldax | April 4, 2014



A stand of trees in the virtually tree-less Iron Triangle neighborhood is looking sharp after the nonprofit group Pogo Park teamed with city staff and local businesses last month to clean, prune and restore them.

The ash trees that line Ohio Avenue between Harbour Way and 8th Street needed the upkeep, said Toody Maher, executive director of Pogo Park, which Maher founded in 2007 in order to transform the neighborhood's rarely used parks and playgrounds into vibrant spaces.

Maher told the Richmond Standard that her staff at Pogo Park, consisting entirely of neighborhood residents, noticed the "magnificent stand of trees" on Ohio Avenue was being neglected.



(Photo courtesy of Pogo Park) Rutilio Rivera and others from the Pogo Park resident team clears grass and weeds from the landscape strip to create healthy soil for the trees.

“This particular stand of ash trees on Ohio is special and remarkable because the Iron Triangle is a neighborhood with virtually no trees,” Maher said.

On March 13, Pogo Park staffers teamed with the city’s Parks and Landscaping Department and arborist Big Chief Tree Service of El Cerrito to offer those lonely trees some love and care.

The nonprofit’s staff “removed every weed and blade of grass by hand from the strip between sidewalk and street,” according to City Manager Bill Lindsay’s newsletter.

Also, Big Chief Tree Service pruned 17 trees, removed two that had died, aerated and vertically composted the soil and placed organic mulch on a 500-foot-long roadside area, Lindsay added.

Near those trees is the site of the future Harbour-8 Park, which Pogo Park is building with help from \$150,000 in funds from The Trust for Public Land, the country’s largest and most prestigious nonprofit that creates parks and open spaces for people. The future park will include gardens and a play area.

“Getting TPL on board in Richmond is a game changer,” Maher said.



Check out an amazing image of the future Harbour-8 Park:



Below is a list of the park projects that Pogo Park is currently working on. For more information about the organization, visit its [website](#).

Elm Playlot



Elm Playlot is a ½ acre park in the middle of the Iron Triangle neighborhood. Before being adopted by Pogo Park as its pilot project, Elm Playlot was, in the words of residents, “dirty, dull and dangerous.” In 2008, the City of Richmond replaced the park’s aging play equipment with new, pre-fabricated play equipment bought from a catalogue, only to have it vandalized within a week. To break this cycle, [Continue reading →](#)

Unity Park on the Richmond Greenway



The Richmond Greenway is a three-mile former rail corridor running through the center of Richmond. The focus of community efforts for decades, local residents envision the Richmond Greenway as a linear community park linking Richmond’s hills to the San Francisco Bay. [Continue reading →](#)

Harbour-8 Park



Adjacent to the Unity Park site, the Harbour-8 site is also on the Richmond Greenway. The site has been formally adopted from the City by Pogo Park and several other local non-profits. Pogo Park is partnering with The Trust for Public Land to build gardens and a play area on this site. [Continue reading →](#)