



THE
CONSERVATION FUND



NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OF RICHMOND GREENWAY ADDS TO PARK; PARTNER POGO PARK GAINS LAND FOR THE COMMUNITY

The Conservation Fund transfers land to the City of Richmond and Pogo Park, laying the foundation for an \$8.5 million enhancement of Harbour-8 Park and building equity for the Iron Triangle community

RICHMOND, Ca. (October 8, 2020) — Today, Richmond Mayor Tom Butt and Pogo Park Board member and former Mayor of Berkeley Gus Newport announced the expansion of the Harbour-8 Park on the Richmond Greenway in the Iron Triangle neighborhood.

A key milestone in [Pogo Park](#)'s Harbour-8 Expansion Project, the addition of a small but important adjacent lot will expand the linear park by 50% and enable the development of commercial activities and the creation of a vibrant, green, public square in the heart of the Iron Triangle Neighborhood.

The project will create jobs and training opportunities for 150 residents in one of the city's most under-resourced communities. The Conservation Fund will also donate a portion of the property to Pogo Park, a local non-profit organization that has received [national recognition](#) for working with a team of local community residents to transform dispirited and dull city parks into beautiful, green and vibrant public spaces.

“The expansion of Harbour-8 Park significantly advances a decades-long goal of transforming the former BNSF right of way now known as the Richmond Greenway into a community-focused gathering space,” said **Mayor Tom Butt**. “Pogo Park’s innovative sites represent forward-thinking approaches to health equity, safety, community engagement and fun for local residents.”

[The Conservation Fund](#), a national nonprofit dedicated to providing conservation solutions that provide both economic and environmental benefits, acquired the property in 2016 with a program-related investment loan from the David & Lucile Packard Foundation and held the site until funding was available from a Prop 68 parks grant awarded earlier in 2020. This week, The Conservation Fund transferred the land to the City of Richmond and to Pogo Park in two simultaneous transactions.

“We are thrilled to see our seven-year dream come true,” said **Toody Maher, Executive Director of Pogo Park**. “We are expanding the size of Harbour-8 Park, designing and building an imaginative, forward-thinking children’s play space; and then we are acquiring land around the park, and developing it in ways that benefit of the community.”

Gus Newport, Pogo Park board member and stalwart leader and advocate for “ground up” civic engagement in urban neighborhoods, exulted in this important step for Pogo Park and Richmond’s Iron Triangle Neighborhood: “Toody and the people that she has brought together are just wonderful. And it’s so heartwarming every time I come here to see how much more this has grown. The number one resource in the community is its people. And when you can inform and spiritualize people to work collectively together for the good of the whole, then you can build almost anything with a planned perspective. Understanding that they need good schools, open space, arts and culture, economic viability, all those things together. It’s not competing with who can be there, but how we can all live collectively together, what Martin Luther King used to refer to as the beloved community, and that’s ultimately what this is developing to be.”

Pogo Park’s partnership with The Conservation Fund is focused on securing strategically located land adjacent to Pogo Park’s existing parks and developing Pogo Park’s capacity to acquire, own, manage and redevelop lands in a way that gives the nonprofit an equity interest in the neighborhoods it revitalizes. The little-used and abandoned Iron Triangle city parks that are transformed by Pogo Park have become vibrant public spaces that provide play opportunities for Richmond’s most vulnerable children as well as lasting health and outdoor recreational benefits for the local community.

“We’re thrilled to be part of this innovative and sustainable approach to bringing safe places to gather and play to the Iron Triangle neighborhood,” said **Chris Kelly, project director for The Conservation Fund**. “We share Pogo Park’s commitment to revitalizing disadvantaged neighborhoods with parks and open spaces in a way that directly engages and sustains, rather than displaces, the residents that make it happen.”

About Pogo Park

Founded in 2007, Pogo Park is an entrepreneurial, community-based, 501(c)3 nonprofit in Richmond, California that creates green and vibrant parks in Richmond’s Iron Triangle neighborhood for children to play, grow, and thrive. Thirteen years ago, Pogo Park reclaimed Elm Playlot, a broken, neglected, and little-used city park in the heart of the Iron Triangle – and transformed it into a safe, green oasis for thousands of local children and their families. <https://pogopark.org/>

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect more than eight million acres of land, including 558,000 acres in California. <https://www.conservationfund.org/>