

Carmel • Clay Parks & Recreation

Adopt-A-Park Program Guidelines

Purpose

The Adopt-A-Park program is intended to provide opportunities for community organizations, businesses, HOA's, or the general public to collaborate with Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation (CCPR) in stewardship of our parks and greenways. By engaging volunteers with regular stewardship responsibilities it's our goal to make long lasting sustainable relationships that connect our natural resources and the members of our community.

Adopter Criteria

Interested individuals or groups must be approved through our application and interview process. Successful candidates will be organizations or residents located in or near the Carmel area. They will demonstrate specific or broad interest level in various work scopes that CCPR has a need to fulfill. Candidates should demonstrate the ability and willingness to maintain agreed upon work scopes at the agreed upon park location. Standard agreements will require an initial trial period of 6 months while working toward an overall commitment of at least 12 months. Agreements are renewable each year.

Responsibilities

Adopters must agree to appropriate stewardship work scopes suitable for their skills and interests. Duties can be as simple as routine litter pickup, or something more involved such as prairie restoration, invasive species control, trail maintenance, or playground mulching. Projects depend on the needs of the adopted park site. Generally these tasks will not require power tools and equipment.

Adopters will be required to provide their own personal protective equipment (PPE) which includes: closed toe shoes, gloves, appropriate eye protection, ear protection, and any other project specific PPE. The Volunteer Coordinator will discuss possible duties once an application has been submitted for the adopter group, as duties will vary for each location. An agreed upon work scope will be decided and documented in the agreement. All work must be completed during daylight hours.

Adopt-A-Park Agreement

Adopters will be issued permission to work upon signing the Adopt-A-Park Agreement by both the adopter designee and the CCPR designee. The agreement outlines the adopted site, all permitted duties, approved tools, materials, and supplies, as well as specific limitations.

Maintenance Standards

Standards for maintenance of the assigned area or trail section will be detailed in the agreement. If agreed-upon standards are not being met, the coordinator will discuss the situation with the adopter designee. If assistance is needed, it may be given in the form of supplementary volunteer work parties, staff support, and additional training or advice. If the adopter wishes exclusive responsibility for the site

but fails after discussion of the agreed-upon standards, the coordinator may terminate the agreement in writing.

Training

The Volunteer Coordinator will conduct initial training with the identified leader or designee of the adopter group until both parties are comfortable with the agreed upon tasks. Adopters must carry out the standards to which they have been trained on and should not attempt additional work scopes that they have not been trained on or is outside the agreement. If at any point an adopter is concerned about the lack of training for a particular task, they should stop and request additional training and/or assistance. The adopter leader will be responsible for training other Adopt-A-Park participants throughout the duration of the agreement. The Volunteer Coordinator may continue to assist with coordinating additional projects and/or training after the adopters are working on their own.

Tools

For routine maintenance, adopters are asked to provide their own tools. For special projects or large groups, the Volunteer Coordinator may coordinate lending tools from CCPR if available. Support may be provided in the form of trash bags and bag pickup. CCPR may support site preparation work (if heavy equipment is required) such as mulch and gravel deliveries if coordinated with advanced notice.

Recognition

Adopt-A-Park participants deserve recognition for all they have accomplished at their adoptive sites. Adopter groups/individuals will be identified with a sign located at the adopted location and will have the opportunity for spotlight on official CCPR social media platforms. Adopter groups/individuals will also be recognized at our annual volunteer recognition program and award ceremony.