



Adopt-A-Park Program Policy for Clark County Public Works¹

1.0 Preamble

Clark County properties, including public parks, trails, and open spaces, etc. are maintained by the Clark County Public Works Department (Public Works). The County recognizes that the opportunities for greater volunteerism are a critical element in supplementing and supporting the skilled work of parks and facilities maintenance staff in building a stronger, healthier, and more sustainable community.

The County seeks greater consistency, coordination and expansion of volunteer opportunities via an Adopt-A-Park program focused on longer term commitments by volunteers in maintaining particular public properties within the County. The policy will:

- Establish parameters for the oversight and support of the County's Adopt-A-Park maintenance program;
- Establish expectations by and among the County and interested volunteers who accept a long term commitment to maintain public property;
- Identify the general scope of maintenance tasks that may be performed by volunteers.

2.0 Organizations Affected

- 2.1 Clark County Public Works Department
- 2.2 Clark County Parks Advisory Board
- 2.3 Parks Foundation of Clark County
- 2.4 Clark County General Services Department
- 2.5 Clark County Neighborhood Associations
- 2.6 Evergreen School District
- 2.7 Vancouver School District
- 2.8 Camas School District
- 2.9 Battle Ground School District
- 2.10 Washougal School District
- 2.11 Hockinson School District
- 2.12 La Center School District

¹ This policy is adapted from the "Adopt-A-Park" program policy for the City of Vancouver, Policy No. 2011.01

3.0 References

- 3.1 Adopt-A-Park program for City of Vancouver
- 3.2 Vancouver Municipal Code
- 3.3 City of Vancouver Charter Article VIII
General Development Section 8.04 Parks and Recreation

4.0 Policy

It is the policy of the Clark County Public Works Department to:

- 4.1 Encourage volunteerism and seek individuals and groups to supplement the ongoing maintenance of County public spaces in neighborhoods in which they reside to build pride and ownership. A volunteer database shall be created and maintained to further these efforts. One-time volunteer events, activities and park repair projects are addressed by a separate policy.
- 4.2 Provide Adopt-A-Park maintenance opportunities for interested individuals to volunteer their time and resources for an extended period to maintain a County property of their choice, including parks, trails, and open spaces.
- 4.3 Provide individual and group volunteer opportunities for a prescribed term, frequency, and duration to be specified in an Appointment Agreement with the County. Maintenance tasks will be jointly identified by the volunteer(s) and the County as specified in the Agreement. Adopt-A-Park volunteers must commit to volunteering for a minimum of six (6) months' duration and performing certain tasks a minimum of once (1x) a month. Volunteer agreements will require volunteers to indemnify and hold harmless the County and other applicable parties associated with the ownership, maintenance, operations or capital improvements of the specified public property(ies), the volunteer tasks performed, and any volunteer or donated improvements.
- 4.4 Provide volunteer coordination, including the recruitment, training, retention, support, and recognition of volunteers. The County, via Public Works, shall support the Adopt-A-Park program with adequate resources for this program.
- 4.5 Promote safe practices by volunteers and minimize risk. The County may require the completion of and compliance with written agreements, liability releases, background checks and other forms and processes. The County reserves the right to immediately suspend or terminate any agreement with an individual volunteer or volunteer organization with or without cause.
- 4.6 Require volunteers to work in groups of three (3) or more at all times for safety and liability purposes. Any individual who will work on an individual basis must submit to a background check.
- 4.7 Encourage persons under the age of eighteen (18) to volunteer, but only with the permission of their parent or guardian. Children thirteen (13) or younger must obtain permission in writing from their parent or guardian and have their parent or guardian present during all volunteer activities. If children thirteen (13) or younger are volunteering as part of an organized group (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts) and are accompanied by one responsible adult leader for every five (5) children thirteen (13) or younger, then this requirement may be waived.

5.0 Definitions

- 5.1 Clark County Public Works Department (Public Works) – Responsible for grounds and greenway maintenance duties in all public parks, sports fields, trails and open spaces.
- 5.2 Clark County General Services – responsible for all facilities and structural maintenance duties in public parks, sports fields, trails and open spaces.
- 5.3 Volunteer Program Coordinator – The Clark County Public Works Department will designate a staff person to serve as the liaison between the County and volunteers and to administer the policies and programs associated with the “Adopt-a-Park” agreement.
- 5.4 Parks Advisory Board (PAB) – created by ordinance and appointed by the Clark County Board of Commissioners (3 members). Non-voting representatives attend from the Evergreen School District, the Vancouver School District and the Parks Foundation of Clark County. The PAB advises the Board of Commissioners, Parks Manager, and other county service areas concerning formulation of policy, plans and programs to carry out duties of providing parks and recreation services.
- 5.5 Recognition Sign: Placard fabricated and installed by Public Works, which includes the Adopt-A-Park Program logo and the name of the volunteer group completing the cleanup events for their adopted section. The sign will be installed within three (3) months of service.

6.0 Responsibility

- 6.1 The Volunteer Program Coordinator, with direction from the Public Works Director, shall oversee the Adopt-a-Park program.
- 6.2 The Volunteer Program Coordinator is authorized to enter into Appointment Agreements with interested individuals or groups for purposes of conducting specific maintenance tasks in or on public parks, trails and open spaces. The Volunteer Program Coordinator is also authorized to suspend or terminate Appointment Agreements, without prior notice and without cause.
- 6.3 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall approve a list of volunteer maintenance tasks and safety requirements in conjunction with the Public Works Director, General Services Director, or their designees.
- 6.4 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall coordinate with the appropriate school district if a volunteer project will occur on a joint school/park property. If the property is owned by the school district, the volunteer effort must comply with the applicable school district policies.
- 6.5 Prior to the approval of a volunteer agreement for maintenance of a park, special feature or facility within a park (e.g., sport field), the Volunteer Program Coordinator shall consult and coordinate with the Public Works grounds staff regarding the proposed maintenance tasks.

7.0 Procedures

- 7.1 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall coordinate opportunities between interested individuals or organizations and appropriate County departments responsible for maintenance activities for the identified County property.
- 7.2 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall be responsible for the recruitment, training, retention, support and recognition of individuals and community groups to participate in the Adopt-A-Park program throughout the County.
- 7.3 The Volunteer Program Coordinator, in coordination with the appropriate County Department, shall identify specific maintenance tasks volunteers can perform, taking into consideration particular interests and abilities of the volunteers, County policies and safety considerations.
- 7.4 Any improvements to County property that are made or added by volunteers will become County property, and will not be maintained, modified or removed without prior authorization by the Volunteer Program Coordinator.
- 7.5 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall consult with interested volunteers to identify appropriate roles for citizens.
- 7.6 An Appointment Agreement shall be entered into between the parties that shall address:
 - i. Schedule—Identification of and commitment to a minimum of six (6) months with a minimum once (1x) a month frequency in performing identified tasks;
 - ii. Participants—Names and contact information of the participating individuals;
 - iii. Liability waivers/forms—All required County forms with signatures, including authorization forms for minors working in the park;
 - iv. Training/safety information—All required training, support, and safety/emergency procedures;
 - v. Tracking information—Volunteers will track and report their work, including date, participants, hours worked and tasks completed;
 - vi. Tasks/scope of work—May include the following:

Task Name	Description
Debris/litter pickup	Provide litter pickup throughout the park
Weed pulling	Remove weeds from landscaped areas
Planting	Trees, shrubs, flowers, etc.
Picnic table cleaning	Wash, clean, sand, paint tables
Playground cleaning	Wash, clean play structures
Play surfacing raking	Rake fiber chips in the play pits
Mulching	Spread and rake mulch/compost in beds
Raking	Leaves/debris, play pits, gravel, sand
Watering	Manual watering of new plant material
Facility cleaning	Cleaning the various features in the parks

*Note—other tasks such as weed-eating, blowing, pruning, graffiti removal or painting may be discussed on a case-by-case basis.

- 7.7 Volunteers shall provide all necessary tools and equipment to perform the identified tasks, including appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment. By arrangement with the Volunteer Program Coordinator may provide additional support resources, including tools, safety materials and equipment.
- 7.8 Volunteers shall not perform tasks outside of the specified list contained in this policy without the written consent of the Volunteer Program Coordinator.
- 7.9 By arrangement and with pre-approval from the Volunteer Program Coordinator and Public Works Director, use of certain personal power equipment may be permitted. Safety and operational conditions will be imposed for any use of personal power equipment on public property.
- 7.10 Debris pick-up (limbs, leaves, garbage, etc.) service may be provided by the County as arranged by the Volunteer Program Coordinator.
- 7.11 The Volunteer Program Coordinator or other Public Works designee, will meet on-site with volunteers to review the Appointment Agreement, conduct safety training, review anticipated maintenance tasks, address questions, etc., prior to the start of work.
- 7.12 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall specify the required event and warning signage, safety procedures, proper use of safety barricades, equipment and clothing, etc. to ensure the protection of volunteers and the public during the performance of maintenance tasks.
- 7.13 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall periodically review the Appointment Agreement and work progress with the volunteer(s) and other applicable County Departments to insure that all work is proceeding as specified in the Agreement and provide support as needed. The Coordinator shall ensure that all required information is being monitored appropriately, will notify volunteers when they are not in compliance with the Agreement and identify steps to resolve outstanding issues.
- 7.14 If a volunteer group appears to have ceased to fulfill the program responsibilities (no volunteer maintenance activity at the park for three (3) months), the Volunteer Program Coordinator will attempt to contact the group leader by phone, e-mail, or written letter. If the group leader does not respond within thirty (30) days, the park adoption will be considered void and the sign will be removed. The park will then be available for adoption by another group or individual.
- 7.15 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall solicit feedback from the volunteers via a survey to understand their interest, issues and concerns with the Adopt-A-Park program. This feedback shall be analyzed by the Coordinator and needed changes identified to ensure success of the program.
- 7.16 The Volunteer Program Coordinator shall compile, monitor, analyze and respond to volunteer tracking data and periodically report performance data to the PRAC

and Public Works Director as requested. The Coordinator shall maintain a current volunteer database. An annual report shall highlight the effectiveness of the program for County officials.

- END OF POLICY-