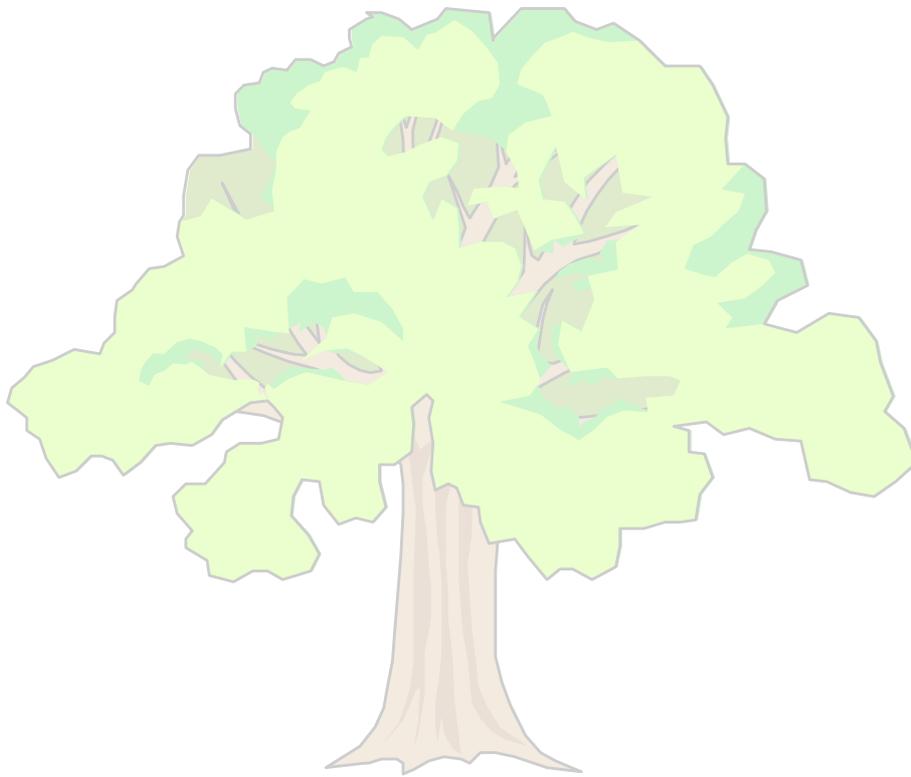


City of Erie Adopt-A-Park Program



Department of Public Works, Property & Parks
Office of Sustainability
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Room 507c
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I. Purpose:

What is Adopt-A-Park?

Adopt-A-Park is a program in which volunteers and community sponsors can assist in the enhancement, upkeep, and preservation of existing local parks, waterways, trails, and green spaces. Volunteers and sponsors provide a valuable service that is supplemental to the regular park maintenance and upkeep provided by the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks.

Volunteers may be individuals, groups, clubs, teams, or businesses interested in beautifying and maintaining public spaces within the City of Erie's Public Parks. Sponsors may be individuals, groups, businesses or corporations interested in providing financial support to public spaces within the City of Erie's Public Parks. Volunteers and sponsors may adopt an area for a period of one year, with renewal offered by September 1 of the subsequent year. Volunteers and Sponsors are recognized via an Adopt-A-Park Sign located at near their adopted area, a letter of appreciation through the Office of Sustainability, and through press releases.

The City of Erie's Adopt-A-Park Program is an extension and formalization of the existing informal network of volunteers, sponsors, and supporting organizations that are currently active in maintaining and beautifying the City of Erie's Public Parks, trails, waterways and green spaces. The Adopt-A-Park Program aims to formalize these connections, recognize the outstanding efforts of the organizations currently involved in parks maintenance and beautification, and expand these efforts into a program to identify areas without community support, enhance community connections, and expand volunteer opportunities within the parks system.

Why is the Adopt-A-Park Program valuable to the City of Erie?

To keep our city clean! Litter is unsightly and can make a park look worn out, neglected, and unsafe. Spring and fall cleanings are essential to maintaining a high standard for our public parks.

To make your neighborhood park more beautiful! Neatly mulched and planted flower beds, litter free lawns, and graffiti-free park structures make for a more appealing and safer neighborhood park for everyone! Volunteer assistance adds an extra layer of loving care to our parks.

To make a difference in your community! Volunteer service is an essential element to creating stronger communities. Lend a hand, make some friends, and make our city beautiful!

II. Policy:

Mission

The City of Erie's Adopt-A-Park Program is designed to promote the involvement of the community in the revitalization of neighborhood green spaces. It shall support the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks in maintaining and beautifying the public parks, trails, waterways and green spaces of the city of Erie.

Vision

The vision of the Adopt-A-Parks Program is to have every public park, trails, waterways and green spaces in the city actively cared for by a network of community volunteers, local sponsors, and neighbors in order to provide beautification and upkeep as an extension of the regular maintenance provide by the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks.

Goals

To work in partnership with citizen groups, businesses, and local organizations to maintain, beautify, and enhance the public spaces of the City of Erie.

To develop the Adopt-A-Park program in a manner which supports the continued improvement of public park quality through Department of Public Works, Property & Park projects and community support.

To create a collaborative network of interested parties in order to promote healthy, safe, and attractive community and land uses.

To reach out to the extended community of Erie County citizens through the creative promotion of public space.

III. Definitions

Adopt-A-Park: A City-wide program in which volunteer organizations can become involved in the regular maintenance and beautification of public spaces throughout the City Parks system.

Adopt-A-Park Sign: A sign located at each park in the Adopt-A-Park system upon which a Sponsor Sign may be attached to identify the park adopter.

Adopt-A-Park Sponsor Sign: A sign attached to the Adopt-A-Park Sign naming park

Adopters and Sponsors: Individuals, Groups, Organizations, or Businesses that have completed the Adopt-A-Park Application and have accepted the responsibility of caring for a park.

Adopt-A-Park Application: The form requesting that an Individual, Group, Organization, or Business become formally responsible for assisting the City of Erie Department of Public Works, Property & Parks in caring for a public space.

Corporate Sponsor Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): A document outlining the responsibilities of the Adopt-A-Park volunteer organization.

Clean Up! Feedback Form: The form prepared by the Adopting Group after their Clean Up! activities informing the Adopt-A-Park Coordinator of their volunteer hours and activities.

Clean Up! Request: The form notifying the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks of the intent of a Sponsor or Adopter to hold a Clean Up! request in their adopted park area.

Parental Waiver of Liability: A line on the waiver of liability to be signed by the parent or guardian of a participant in the Clean Up! under the age of 18 who is not an emancipated individual releasing the City, its sponsors, employees, and heirs from legal responsibility for accidents, injury, or loss of property while participating in, while in route to, or from an Adopt-A-Park activity.

Photo/Media Release Waiver: A waiver signed by each participant, business, organization, or sponsor in the Clean Up! agreeing to allow photos or other media taken of the participants while participating in the Adopt-A-Park program to be used for publicity purposes for the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks.

Sponsor Organization: An organization that has completed the Adopt-A-Park application and has been appointed sponsor of a public space in the Adopt-A-Park program.

Sustainability Coordinator: The employee of the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks responsible for the maintenance and oversight of the daily affairs of the Adopt-A-Park program.

Volunteer Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): A document outlining the responsibilities of the Adopt-A-Park volunteer organization.

Volunteer Organization: Any organization empowered by law to enter into contractual agreements which permit volunteers to participate in the Adopt-A-Park program.

Waiver of Liability: A waiver signed by each participant in the Adopt-A-Park program releasing the city, its sponsors, employees and heirs from legal responsibility for accidents, injury, or loss of property while participating in, while in route to, or from an Adopt-A-Park activity.

VI. Adopt-A-Park Responsibilities

Public Works employees maintain a regular schedule of park maintenance, including grass cutting, litter pick up, weeding, mulching, playground inspection, and repairs.

Adopt-A-Park volunteers take on the next level of beautification, providing spring and fall clean up, extra pruning, flower plantings, and special project maintenance to make their parks sparkle! Volunteers save maintenance and tax dollars by allowing maintenance crews to devote their efforts to other important projects throughout the City of Erie.

Guidelines

Adopt-a-Park is open to volunteer groups, community groups, churches, families and individuals for a minimum commitment of one year. Park cleanup must be performed a minimum of two times per year – once in the fall, and once in the spring. Parks are chosen on a first-come, first-served basis. Parks may have more than one community sponsor. Park adoptions may be renewed indefinitely. Organizational assistance is available through the Office of Sustainability.

Clean up may only take place during regular park hours and seasons of operation. City of Erie Department of Sustainability Coordinator should be notified one week prior to a scheduled clean up. Please call at least three weeks in advance for larger public area cleanups that may require a temporary dumpster.

Safety

All clean up participants and sponsors should sign the Waiver of Liability and Photo Release Form prior to assisting in the clean up operations. Participants under age 18 must have a parental consent form before assisting in the clean up.

Participants in the clean up should behave in a safe and responsible fashion while participating in the Adopt-A-Park program, and be respectful of the parks regular visitors, maintenance crew, and wildlife. Areas of intensive clean up may be required to be roped off to limit visitors from entering areas undergoing clean up. Participants should wear the proper safety equipment while working on parks properties. Suggested equipment includes: long sleeve shirts, long pants, closed toe shoes, gloves, hats, sunscreen, and insect protection.

A first aid kit should be made available by the sponsoring group on site during the clean up. In case of emergency, participants should notify 911. Clean up will be postponed or stopped immediately if rain, lightning, or heavy winds are present. At no time should litter be removed directly from paved roadways, beyond the curb, or on bridges for the safety of volunteers. A clean up report must be filed with the Office of Sustainability two weeks after the clean up. A list of participants and tasks should be created for the clean up report.

If safety vests, safety cones, gloves or other supplies are required for your Clean Up!, please feel free to contact Erie Department of Public Works, Office of Sustainability at (814) 870-1255.

Trash

Trash bags for clean up are provided by the City of Erie. They may be picked up at the Office of Sustainability, room 507c of City Hall. Any unused trash bags must be returned to 507c City Hall by the week after the clean up. Bagged litter from the clean up should be neatly collected into an area of the park accessible to Public Works Maintenance Vehicles. Recyclables should be clearly labeled and stacked separately from the bagged litter. Scheduling of bagged litter and debris removal or delivery and pickup of waste dumpsters is based on availability of staff and equipment from the Adopt-A-Park Program and partnering agencies, and may be subject to change without notice.

Paint and other materials may be provided by the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks for approved projects. All projects must be approved by the Office of Sustainability prior to beginning work.

If bags or other supplies are required at any time, or for questions about the program, please feel free to contact Erie Department of Public Works, Office of Sustainability at (814) 870-1255.

Signs

Once a park has been adopted, a sign will be placed identifying the sponsors, businesses, groups or organizations involved in the program at that park. Identification of the park's adoptive sponsors will also be placed on the City's website as a volunteer member of the program. Upon completion of a year in the program, a letter of appreciation will be sent to the sponsoring agencies.

Activity Suggestions

When scheduling a Clean Up!, the

- Remove Litter
- Remove Weeds

- Prune Shrubs/Small Trees
- Remove Invasive Plants (CONSULT WITH SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR BEFORE STARTING AN INVASIVE PLANT REMOVAL PROJECT)
- Paint Structures
- Paint over graffiti
- Repair Benches/Picnic Tables/Garbage Cans/Structures
- Refresh Mulch
- Plant Flowers/Shrubs/Trees
- Install Park Amenities (AS APPROVED BY DEPT. OF PARKS)
- Trail/Path Maintenance (trail markers, rake/mulch,
- Trail/Path Repair (Erosion control, trail markers, rock removal, trail head signage)

Clean Up! Request

The week before the clean up, please pick up your Clean-Up! packet and refuse bags at the Office of Sustainability, 626 State Street, room 507c. Please let us know if additional bags are necessary for the weekly/monthly clean ups. The City of Erie will provide refuse collection after the clean-up event.

Volunteer groups select a theme or special event as a focus for their Clean Up! activity. Some suggestions are included below.

- Plant a Flower Day (March 12)
- International Earth Day (March 20)
- Take a Walk in the Park Day (March 30)
- Lawn and Garden Month (April)
- Garden Week (2nd Week of April)
- Week of the Day of Caring (3rd Week of April)
- Arbor Day (Last Friday of April)
- Wildflower Week (2nd Week of May)
- May Day (May 1st)
- Love a Tree Day (May 16th)
- World Environment Day (June 6th)
- National Picnic Month (July)
- Johnny Appleseed Day (September 26th)
- International Coastal Clean Up Day (3rd Saturday of September)
- Get Organized Week (1st Week of October)
- Do Something Nice Day (October 5th)
- Make a Difference Day (4th Saturday of October)

The City of Erie receives free refuse collection for the week of Caring (3rd Week of April) and the week of the International Coastal Clean Up (3rd Week of September)

September). Annual spring and fall park Clean Up! activities should preferentially occur within these weeks.

Volunteers are asked to place filled bags adjacent to a waste receptacle or adjacent to a pathway or boulevard for ease of access by Public Works. At the conclusion of the Clean Up!, please call the Department of Public Works at (814) 870-1415, and indicate the number of bags collected and their location.

Clean Up! Feedback Form

At the conclusion of the Clean UP! a feedback form should be completed by the contact for the volunteer groups participating.

Adoptions & Renewals

A list of areas available for adoption can be requested from the Office of Sustainability, Department of Public Works, Property & Parks, 626 State Street, Room 507c (814) 870-1415. Organizational assistance is available through the Office of Sustainability.

Volunteers and sponsors may adopt an area for a period of one year, with renewal offered by September 1 of the subsequent year. Renewal is contingent upon the volunteers and sponsors completing the twice yearly clean-up activities.

Volunteers and sponsors may elect to discontinue the program or change park areas (provided their choice of area is not currently adopted) at the renewal period. More than one area may be adopted by a volunteer or sponsor.

Coordinator Responsibilities

The Office of Sustainability, in the Department of Public Works, Property and Parks has the responsibility for organizing and maintaining the Adopt-A-Park program. The Sustainability Coordinator maintains the forms, program documentation, website, signage, and other business for the Adopt-A-Park Program. Assistance in program organization for interested volunteers and sponsors is available through this office.

The Office of Sustainability will also maintain media contact for the Adopt-A-Park program, and may use photos or other media obtained during Clean Up! events to promote the program.

The Office of Sustainability
626 State Street, Room 507c
Erie, PA 16501

Clean Up! Guidelines:

- Clean up may only take place during regular park hours and seasons of operation.
- City of Erie Department of Sustainability Coordinator should be notified one week prior to a scheduled clean up. Please call at least three weeks in advance for larger public area cleanups that may require additional organization.
- All clean up participants and sponsors should sign the Waiver of Liability and Photo Release Form prior to assisting in the clean up operations.
- Participants under age 18 must have a parental consent form before assisting in the clean up.
- A first aid kit should be made available by the sponsoring group on site during the clean up.
- A list of participants and tasks should be created for the clean up report.
- Clean up will be postponed or stopped immediately if rain, lightning, or heavy winds are present.
- At no time should litter be removed directly from paved roadways, beyond the curb, or on bridges for the safety of volunteers.
- Trash bags for clean up may be provided by the City of Erie. They may be picked up at the Office of Sustainability, room 507 of City Hall.
- Bagged litter from the clean up should be neatly collected into an area of the park accessible to Public Works Maintenance Vehicles.
- Recyclables should be clearly labeled and stacked separately from the bagged litter.
- Scheduling of bagged litter and debris removal or delivery and pickup of waste dumpsters is based on availability of staff and equipment from the Adopt-A-Park Program and partnering agencies, and may be subject to change without notice.
- Any unused trash bags must be returned to 507 City Hall by the week after the clean up.
- A clean up report must be filed with the Office of Sustainability two weeks after the clean up.
- If vests, bags or other supplies are required at any time, or for questions about the program, please feel free to contact the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks, Office of Sustainability at (814) 870-1255.



CITY OF ERIE – ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM

MISSION

The mission of the City of Erie’s Adopt-A-Park Program is to promote the involvement of the community in the revitalization of neighborhood green spaces and to support the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks in maintaining and beautifying public parks, trails, waterways and green spaces of the City of Erie.

VISION

The vision of the Adopt-A-Park Program is to have every public park, trail, waterway and green space in the city actively cared for by a network of community volunteers, local sponsors, and neighbors in order to provide beautification and upkeep as an extension of the regular maintenance provided by the Department of Public Works, Property & Parks.

WHO

Volunteer groups, community groups, businesses, churches, families and individuals

WHAT

Public Works: Maintains a regular schedule of park maintenance, including grass cutting, litter pick up, playground inspection, and repairs.

Adopt-A-Park Volunteers: Take on the next level of beautification to make their parks sparkle! Such as: spring and fall clean up, extra pruning, flower plantings, weeding, mulching, and special project maintenance. Park cleanup must be performed a minimum of two times per year – once in the fall, and once in the spring.

WHEN

Park adoptions are a minimum commitment of one year and may be renewed indefinitely.

For more information, please contact: Sarah Galloway, 870-1255,
sgalloway@erie.pa.us

