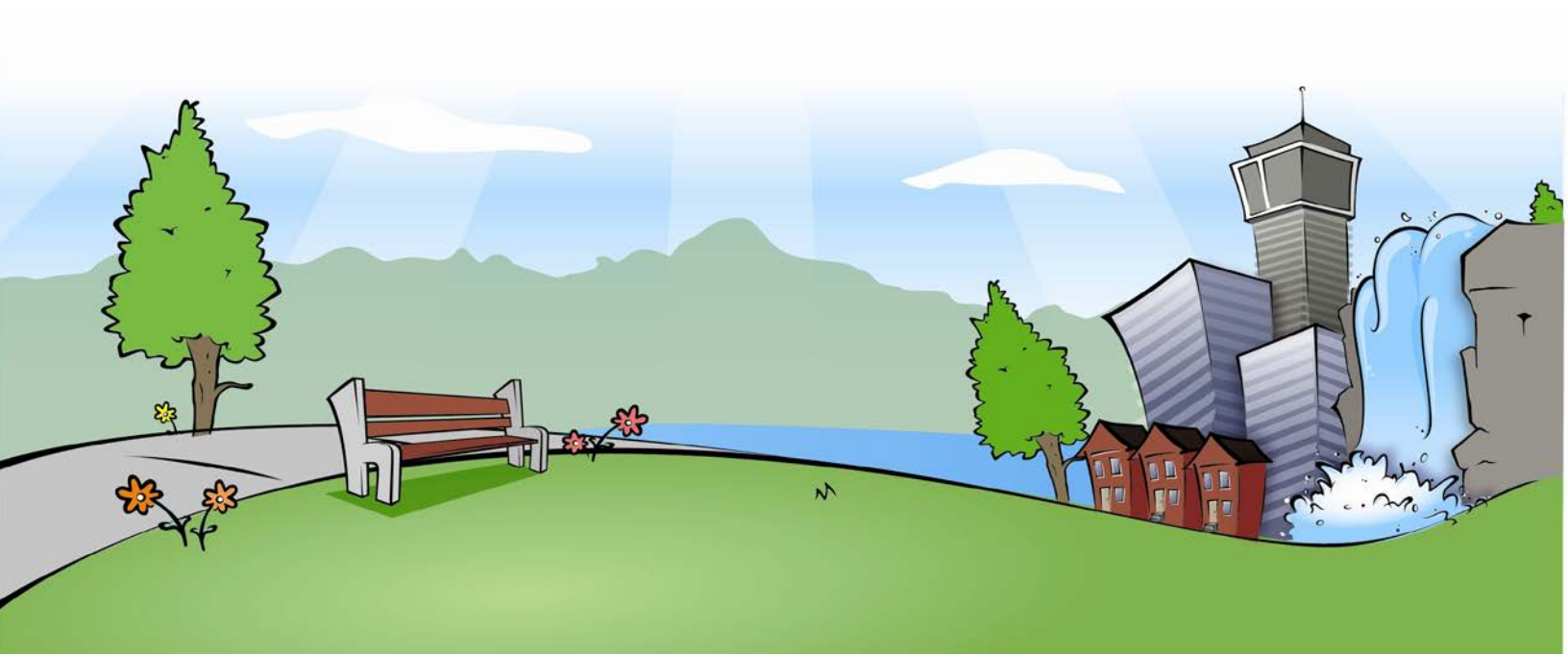


Adopt • A • Park



Hamilton

Parks Hamilton Volunteer Manual





What is the Adopt-a-Park Program?

The Adopt-a-Park Program is a year round program for volunteers to help maintain and care for trees, flowers and shrub beds in their local park. The ultimate goal of the Adopt-a-Park Program is to engage park users and community groups in creating and preserving clean and safe parks for everyone. Volunteer clean up efforts create great parks and great parks make great neighbourhoods!

Eligible sites

The City of Hamilton parks system includes over 400 parks and trails. Any city-owned park, parkette or trail is eligible.

How it works

Adopt-a-Park groups sign up and agree to care for a park for three years. The group must host litter clean ups, add woodchips or mulch for trees, remove or report graffiti and weed shrub beds at least four times each year.

Many groups hold events to promote park usage or fundraise for park enhancements such as benches, trees, play structures, and more.

What are the benefits of adopting a park?

Volunteer commitment to local neighbourhood is crucial in keeping our parks system clean, safe and beautiful. A beautiful and vibrant neighbourhood park attracts users and volunteers, increasing pride in the surrounding area.

Participating Adopt-a-Park groups receive a certificate of appreciation, an Adopt-a-Park sign with the group's name; in recognition of the group's efforts. As a special thank you, the City of Hamilton will acknowledge your commitment and dedication with an official Adopt-a-Park Partner Certificate.

As an Adopt-a-Park partner you can:

- Help beautify parks and community
- Gain a sense of community and civic pride
- Help preserve natural resources
- Enjoy the benefits of outdoor activity
- Help reduce crime and vandalism
- Lead by example in keeping Hamilton clean & green!

GREAT PARKS MAKE GREAT NEIGHBOURHOODS!

What is the role of the City of Hamilton?

The City will:

- Provide regular maintenance in all city parks
- Help you choose a park and determine what you can do to improve the park
- Provide support to Adopt-a-Park groups when needed, including volunteer management and safety training
- Receive and review park and trail comments and incident reports
- Provide the tools you'll need for a successful clean-up (litter & recycling bags, gloves, yard waste bags and safety information)
- Pick up garbage, recycling, and yard waste if needed

Adopt-a-Park enrolment process

1. Fill out the application form available online at www.hamilton.ca/adoptapark, or call 905-546-2424 (x1312).
2. Email, fax, or mail the application to:
Email: clean&green@hamilton.ca
Fax: 905-546-4473
Mail to: City of Hamilton – Public Works Department
Adopt-a-Park
71 Main St West
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5
3. The City will arrange to meet with you to complete the process of adopting a park.

Requests are processed on a first come, first served basis. If more than one group requests the same park at the same time, a lottery will be held to choose which group will adopt the park. The City of Hamilton makes the final decision to allow a group to adopt a park.



GREAT PARKS MAKE GREAT NEIGHBOURHOODS!

Volunteer responsibilities

Volunteers participating in the Adopt-A-Park program must:

- Appoint or select a group representative to act on behalf of the group
- Attend annual Adopt-a-Park training session
- Be familiar with "Safety Guidelines for Volunteers" before participating in a clean-up of the adopted park. It is the responsibility of the group representative to assure all volunteers have received safety training before they participate.
- Obey and abide by all laws and regulations relating to safety and such terms and conditions as may be required by the City
- Make arrangements for off road parking or shuttle bus-type of travel to the worksite
- Provide transportation, supervision, safety equipment and medical/first aid service
- Host a clean up at least four (4) times each year and place wood chips around trees at least once (1) each year or as required
- Wear a city-approved safety vest when near a roadway
- Wear appropriate safety apparel during the clean-up; such as safety glasses and protective gloves (if required)
- Not pick up litter on roads, paved or gravel shoulders, medians, bridges, tunnels, overpasses, or around other structures or locations that could pose a danger
- Wear clothing that will not impair vision or movement during the pick-up
- Ensure that no individual under the age of thirteen (13) is present at the work site without a parent or guardian's permission
- Provide supervision by one adult (18 years of age or older) for every ten (10) or less volunteers under 13 years of age
- Ensure no volunteer possesses or consumes illegal drugs or alcohol immediately before or during an Adopt-a-Park clean up
- Suspend Adopt-a-Park activities when weather conditions become inclement (i.e. fog, rain, drizzle, high wind, electrical storms, etc.)
- Ensure that pets are on a leash and that no potentially dangerous animals are present that could inflict injury or disease (i.e. bite, scratch or disease transmission such as rabies from raccoons, skunks, foxes, etc.)
- Work only during daylight hours (1 hour after sunrise and 1 hour before sunset)
- Flag closed containers, heavy objects, or suspicious hazardous materials for pick-up and disposal by City staff. Contact City staff at 905-546-CITY (2489) for removal of hazardous materials.

- Ensure that no signs, posters, or other display materials are posted in the adopted park during or between clean-ups
- Put garbage bags at the designated pick-up site(s) as pre-arranged by the City and the group representative
- Notify the City immediately after each clean-up to have garbage bags and debris removed
- File a **Community Improvement Report** within 5 days of the completed clean up
- Ensure that Adopt-a-Park activities do not occur on the dates noted in the AGREEMENT
- Return all inventory to the City at the end of an Adopt-A-Park AGREEMENT unless it is renewed. Failure to do so will result in the group or individual being billed for the replacement value of the items

Adopt-a-Park partnership conditions:

The City of Hamilton has the right to terminate an agreement if an Adopt-a-Park group does not meet the terms and conditions of the program agreement. The City may establish other procedures and requirements for the administration of its Adopt-a-Park program at any time.

The City is responsible for a large group of volunteers. Any questions you have regarding the Adopt-a-Park program should be directed to the City's Community Liaison Coordinator, at (905) 546-2424 x 1312.



GREAT PARKS MAKE GREAT NEIGHBOURHOODS!



Before you begin your Adopt-a-Park event:

1. Ensure that all participants complete the volunteer participant list. Participants under 18 years of age must have the signature of their parent or guardian.
2. Ensure that you have discussed the safety tips and regulations. Identify, evaluate and eliminate Health & Safety risks to ensure that hazards are managed.
3. Make sure you have all tools and materials required to complete your clean up safely and efficiently. Check that your equipment is in good working condition.
4. If you have any questions, call (905)-546-2424 x 1312.

After your event:

1. Ensure that your group leader keeps all Adopt-a-Park participant lists.
2. Please call 905-546-2424 x 1312 to make arrangements to return any unused supplies or for removal of bulk items.
3. Complete and submit the **Community Improvement Report** within 5 business days.

Safety first!
**Under no circumstance is the welfare of a
volunteer to be compromised during a clean up.**



Health & Safety information

Identify, evaluate and eliminate Health & Safety risks to ensure that hazards are managed.

- Gloves and/or hand protection shall be worn at all times while engaged in clean-up activities
- Appropriate footwear must be worn while work is being performed. Sandals are not permitted
- Loose or hanging jewelry and clothing must not be worn in any area where it could get caught and cause bodily harm
- Volunteers should avoid working alone in secluded areas. Pair volunteers to work together in these areas.
- Volunteers should avoid working or coming into contact with infectious materials (any device such as a needle, syringe, or item that could cut or puncture and cause infection, disease, or infect an open wound). Volunteers must notify the group representative who then must notify City staff. Only properly trained coordinators or City staff is permitted to remove these items.
- Volunteers are not permitted to work under the influence of drugs, alcohol, etc.
- Do not pick up anything that is too awkward or too heavy
- When lifting, remember to stand close to the load with your feet spread shoulder width apart, with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance. Squat down bending at the knees (do not bend at your waist). Tuck your chin while keeping your back as vertical as possible. Get a firm grasp of the object before beginning the lift. Begin slowly lifting with your LEGS by straightening them. Never twist your body during this step. Once the lift is complete, keep the object as close to your body as possible. As the load's center of gravity moves away from your body, there is a dramatic increase in stress to the lumbar region of your back. If you must turn while carrying the load, turn using your feet-not your torso. To place the object below the level of your waist, follow the same procedures in reverse order. Remember, keep your back as vertical as possible and bend at the knees.

Sunblock or sunscreen

- Sun protection is a vital concern and we train city staff to use an approved sunscreen whenever they are exposed to long periods of work under the sun. For your own protection, sunblock or sunscreen should be applied prior to starting your clean up. You are required to provide your own sun protection. It will not be provided by the City. **Please refer to the City of Hamilton's Corporate Safety Guideline, COH-RQ-GD-001. Please call (905) 546-2424 x1312 to receive a copy of this document.**

Insect repellent

- For your own protection, you should have a good repellent, and keep your pant cuffs tucked into your socks or boots. City staff uses insect repellent when engaged in work activities where insect bites are possible. You are required to provide your own insect repellent. It will not be provided by the City. **Please refer to the City of Hamilton's Corporate Safety Guideline, COH-RQ-GD-026. Please call (905) 546-2424 x1312 to receive a copy of this document.**

Emergency Response

- Bring a phone to call for help (9-1-1) in case of an emergency.
- After calling emergency services, please call (905) 546-2424 x1312 to report the incident. Complete an Incident Report Form for each incident.

First aid kits

- You are required to supply your own first aid kit. The kit should be readily available. It should include, at a minimum, bandages, a compression bandage, antiseptic swabs and tweezers. A member of your group must be trained in basic first aid and emergency procedures in order to properly administer first aid.
- Please note that a first aid kit is provided in the Community Clean Trailer.

Hand washing

- Always wash your hands after each clean up with soap and water or a hand sanitizer.

Safety first!

Under no circumstance is the welfare of a volunteer to be compromised during a clean-up.



Contacts

Adopt-a-Park Program Information:

Community Outreach

Tel: (905) 546-2424 x 1312

Fax: (905) 546-4473

Email: clean&green@hamilton.ca

Website: www.hamilton.ca/adoptapark

Mailing Address:

City Hall, 71 main Street West

Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5

Life threatening emergencies:

911

Non-life threatening emergencies:

Hamilton Police Services

(905) 546-4925

Needles:

Contact the Needle Exchange Program at (905) 546-3541 or contact the City of Hamilton at (905) 546-CITY (2489).

Graffiti reporting:

Call 911 to report graffiti in progress.

Call (905) 546-CITY (2489) to report existing graffiti.

Vandalism:

Vandalism should be reported immediately to the City of Hamilton by calling (905) 546-CITY (2489). Do not intervene.

Planning tips:

1. Organize clean ups around Earth Day in April, or during the fall after the leaves have dropped. Register for It's Your Park Day.
2. Spread the word to your neighbours and people in your local community to get them excited about a park clean up. Keep a list of those who have interest in helping out and keep them informed of the time and day of the big clean up. A simple email list or a Facebook page will keep your group engaged.
3. Tour the park and observe the litter there. Determine how the litter will be disposed of: i.e. garbage, recyclable, leaf and yard waste. Leave hazardous material or waste for City staff to collect.
4. Remove glass bottles before they are broken.
5. Divide volunteers into groups and have some pick up litter, some remove graffiti, and others weed shrub beds or mulch the trees. Volunteers who are well organized, accomplish more.
6. Use the Community Clean Trailer and the Clean & Green Trailer when possible. It has all the tools and equipment you will need to help make your park look great! (You will need to request the Community Clean Trailer and the Clean & Green Trailer in advance of your clean up date.)
7. Report vandalism. Call (905) 546-CITY (2489) to report vandalism, including graffiti.
8. Complete a Community Improvement Report.

Community Clean Trailer

The Community Clean Trailer and the Clean & Green Trailer is available to all Adopt-a-Park groups. The Community Clean Trailer and the Clean & Green Trailer has tools and supplies for litter clean up, graffiti removal, and beautification activities.

Complete the Community Clean Trailer and the Clean and Green Trailer Request Form available online at hamilton.ca/adoptapark if you want the trailer at your clean up event.



GREAT PARKS MAKE GREAT NEIGHBOURHOODS!

Extreme Park Makeover

In 2008, to enhance the Adopt-a-Park program, the City launched 'Extreme Park Makeover.' The program's vision: to have local neighbourhood groups, City staff, sponsors and volunteers working together to renovate and update select City parks.



Jackie Washington Rotary Park, Lucy Day, Woodlands Park, Birge Park, Powell Park, Corktown, North Central, Belview, Pinky Lewis Parkette and Lifesavers have already had makeovers! Working with Adopt-a-Park group volunteers and local sponsors, these parks have been enhanced and renewed.

The Extreme Park Makeover program is available to all Adopt-a-Park groups. Ask us how your park can receive an Extreme Park Makeover!



GREAT PARKS MAKE GREAT NEIGHBOURHOODS!

Ideas for Adopt-a-Park Partners:

Getting involved is easy. Your group could organize any or all of the following suggested activities:

- Host a 'Youth Park Stewardship' event (adopters host a cleanup event or environmental stewardship activity for youth to earn community service hours within their own community)
- Litter cleanups, tree plantings and native flower & bulb plantings
- Host a 'Playground Environmental Play-Day' event
- Host a Tim Hortons Team Up To Clean Up event in April
- Host and monitor a 'park safety' or community watch program
- Host a community lawn or garden workshop in the park
- Bird and bat box habitat development

Your group acts as a goodwill ambassador teaching others to respect and safeguard their neighbourhood parks.

Please remember, before you engage in any of these additional Adopt-a-Park activities and projects to contact City staff for assistance, permission and support.

Any one of these events can provide Adopt-a-Park Partners an opportunity to get active and contribute (whether through a cleanup, event or environmental stewardship activity) to their community's park!

The 'Stoop & Scoop' Program & Dog Cafés:

Every spring we look forward to melting snow and seeing grass again. If you are a dog owner, then there is something else you see a lot of after the snow melts ... pet droppings.

The 'Stoop and Scoop' Program sends a positive message about responsible pet ownership to the public. Dog owners are encouraged to clean up after their pets in community parks. Adopters have the opportunity to raise funds for 'stoop and scoop' equipment for their adopted park. When you 'stoop and scoop'; sidewalks, parks and green spaces are much cleaner and therefore, nicer for everyone to enjoy.

Many of our Adopt-a-Park Partners have held Dog Cafés to educate and encourage pet owners to pick up after their animals. Dog Cafés are designed to reward and encourage the right behavior in our parks.

Graffiti Removal and Painting Initiatives:

Keeping our park system beautiful is everyone's responsibility. By taking the time and effort to remove graffiti from underpasses, bridges, signs, picnic tables, facility walls and other sports venue amenities, Adopt-a-Park Partners are taking pride in their community and making a difference.

With input and guidance from the City of Hamilton Parks Department and on-site support from the Parks Hamilton staff; Adopt-a-Park groups can arrange and organize a painting activity in their specific park.

Every Tree Count:

Tree planting activities are a great way to engage your group in making a positive impact on the environment while beautifying your community. With input and guidance from the City of Hamilton Parks Department and on-site support from the Parks Hamilton and Forestry staff, tree planting activities are easy to organize. With thorough preplanning, tree plantings can be accommodated during the spring and fall seasons.

Tree mulching reduces the number of weeds that compete with trees for vital nutrients and water. Adopt-a-Park groups are encouraged to woodchip or mulch trees in their parks. Parks Hamilton will provide all the woodchips required at no charge.

Host a Community Open House Event in the Park

Get your community involved by hosting a Community Open House at your adopted green space or park! Work with the Parks Hamilton staff and community organizations to develop a team to organize an event. A Community Open House in your Park can engage your community to do something informative and positive in your neighbourhood:

- Information on current City of Hamilton programs and services;
- Recreation brochures and information
- Neighbourhood Action Plans/Strategy
- Environmental games and experiments – Earth Day Hamilton, Environment Hamilton, or Green Venture
- Water and Energy Conservation
- Put Waste in the Right Place- the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse & Recycle)

Naturalization Project & Butterfly Gardens:

In consultation with the City of Hamilton Parks Department, Adopt-a-Park Partners are encouraged to submit their plans and ideas for park naturalization projects. Projects may include;

- Naturalize planting areas
- Butterfly gardens
- Shrub beds

Lots of great ideas:

Adopt-a-Park Partners are encouraged to research, design and organize their own ideas and initiatives for park projects, events and activities.

Please take the time to discuss your options with other members of your group and prepare a proposal to Parks Hamilton. (Please note: staff assistance, materials and equipment are subject to availability).

When brainstorming keep the following principals in mind;

- Safety is vital.
- How will the idea impact park users?
- How will it be maintained?

There are many safety and equipment regulations to be considered when enhancing parks. Always take weather conditions and city by-laws into consideration when determining what may work for you park.

All maintenance projects and activities must be pre-approved by the City of Hamilton Parks Department. Please consult with the Community Liaison Coordinator.

Share your Successes!

Volunteers, neighbourhoods and Parks Hamilton want to know about your efforts and successes! We encourage Adopt-a-Park groups to share their success on social media and in local and community newspapers & newsletters.

Complete the Community Improvement Report! Send us photos and stories for our annual Great Parks Report and post on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/cleangreenhamilton