



2016 KEEP GENESEE COUNTY BEAUTIFUL ADOPT A PARK APPLICATION GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

Keep Genesee County Beautiful (KGCB) is accepting applications for the 2016 Adopt a Park Program and encourages volunteer groups to step up and become involved in making a park in a City of Flint neighborhood a clean, safe and attractive place to play and meet.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Adopt a Park Program provides information and resources to help volunteer groups develop the organizational skills, knowledge and partnerships necessary to adopt and reclaim parks in the City of Flint. Well-kept parks can add beauty to the neighborhood, provide play spaces for children and give adults a place to gather with neighbors, reduce crime and vandalism, improve health by offering opportunities for recreation and exercise, increase property values, reflect the history and culture of their neighborhoods and attract new residents, businesses, and investments. The City of Flint has few resources to spend on parks but has committed to mow the parks (using contractors) twice a month beginning April/May and ending in October of each year.

Managed through the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission - Keep Genesee County Beautiful program (KGCB) with generous funding from the Ruth Mott Foundation, the City of Flint Adopt a Park program connects dedicated organizations and neighborhood groups working in the City of Flint parks with resources and support aimed at empowering these groups to improve and cleanup parks in their neighborhoods. Working closely with City planning staff, KGCB (as of January 1, 2016) sponsors 34 groups, who are adopting and beautifying 33 neighborhood parks.”

CITY OF FLINT MASTER PLAN AND STRATEGIES FOR PARKS

As included in Section 7 of the City of Flint Master Plan adopted in October 2013, “...the City should seek to improve the condition of its open spaces by making sure all residents have reasonable access to safe and attractive parks and natural areas. Given the current state of Flint’s park system, this is a substantial effort and will take the City...and other partners all working together....Although the maintenance of all parks should meet acceptable standards, the first priority...should be to eliminate all potential hazards and liabilities, followed by improving aesthetics and making parks more attractive....Although funds from the Parks Millage are severely limited and continue to decline, it is essential that investment decisions are based upon what is most beneficial for our vulnerable populations, especially youth.” Any recommendations related to community greening or found in any other sections of the City of Flint Master Plan related to parks may be taken into consideration during the application review process.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE ADOPT A PARK PROGRAM?

Volunteer groups will assume responsibility for the general cleanliness and condition of a park. Efforts should be made to include and involve young/school age students who would potentially play in the park. There are three levels in the Adopt a Park program:

1) Park Adopters (Level 1) All groups start as Park Adopters. This level is open to a group of volunteers who sponsor the park and are committed to making and keeping that park a clean and safe place. This is

accomplished through a spring and fall cleanup and weekly maintenance (as described in the Adopt a Park Application). Park Adopters are also required to participate in an Orientation Workshop and training sessions which include: 1) Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts applied to the City's parks as an initial effort to improve safety and security, and 2) How to Develop a Park Improvement Plan. At this level, groups also "grow" their volunteer numbers to the size recommended to adequately take care of that park. KGCB provides all supplies to keep the park clean at no cost.

2) Park Tenders (Level 2) is open to a limited number of parks each year. This includes committed groups of volunteers who have already been actively and successfully working in their park as Park Adopters over a period of time to keep it clean and may have received other funding for their park and/or have established programming and/or activities in their park. Park Tenders are required to meet the recommended volunteer numbers established for their park. New and existing Park Tenders groups will also be required to participate in an Orientation Workshop and training sessions which include: 1) Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) training and 2) An intensive planning session to develop a Five-Year Park Improvement Plan. Park Tenders will receive park improvements as designated in their Five-Year Park Improvement Plan each year for up to 5 years. Park improvements may include new playground equipment, removal/repair and/or demolition of hazardous playground equipment, picnic tables, fencing, baseball diamonds, basketball court overhauls, etc. and a new City of Flint park sign.

3) Park Keepers (Level 3) is open to Park Tender groups who have completed the major work in their Five-Year Park Improvement Plan and continue to maintain their park, seek other funding for their park and/or develop regular programming for their park.

Over the course of the spring and summer, additional park funding may become available. In the past, these dollars have been used for both minor park improvements such as replacing boards on benches or bleachers, painting, replacement pieces for broken playground equipment and removal of hazardous items in the parks and major improvements as indicated above. Each park is monitored on a weekly basis from April thru October to insure that the park is clean and to answer questions from the sponsoring volunteer groups.

KGCB works with Republic Services to pickup garbage and yard waste at each park as well as small branches that meet Republic's requirements. All new parks are given garbage containers at the beginning of the year as well as garbage bags and locks and chains to keep the containers in the park. All park adopters are expected to replace garbage bags at least once a week to control for animals and to keep offensive smells to a minimum.

BEFORE YOU APPLY TO THE ADOPT A PARK PROGRAM

Potential Park Adopters are also encouraged to read through a document called **2016 City of Flint Parks Classification, Adoption Status and Guidelines for the KGCB Adopt a Park Program**. Parks eligible for adoption are listed as "available" next to their name. Many "Neighborhood" and "Community" parks need more adopters. Please call KGCB at 767-9696 if you are interested in co-adopting a park. Key information to consider when adopting a park includes: 1) Finding committed volunteers who are physically able to walk through the whole park on a weekly basis, pick up litter and empty garbage cans, 2) Meeting the minimum number of volunteers required to adopt a park (though the maximum number of volunteers is highly recommended).

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Keep Genesee County Beautiful invites neighborhood groups, block clubs and associations, community and civic groups, non-profit organizations, nearby businesses, places of worship, school groups and/or other interested parties to complete an Adopt a Park Application for a City of Flint park.

ADOPT A PARK APPLICATION

Call the KGCB Office to request a copy of the Adopt a Park Application Packet or visit our website at www.kgcb.net to download the packet. Read through the Adopt a Park Guidelines and other materials, visit the park to fill in sections of the applications and complete the application in the format provided. **Original signatures are required.** Technical assistance is available by calling Karen West at 767-9696.

Submit your signed application, including original signatures by mailing or dropping off to:

Keep Genesee County Beautiful
2016 Adopt a Park Application
1509 E. Court St.
Flint, MI 48503

If dropping off to the KGCB office, please call first at 810.767.9696 to make sure someone is at the office to accept your application.

NOTIFICATION

Applicants will be notified within two weeks after submission of a complete application. Successful applicants will be required to attend an orientation session and additional training sessions.

Funding for the 2016 Keep Genesee County Beautiful Adopt a Park Program is made possible by the:

Ruth Mott Foundation