

Durham Parks and Recreation Department's

# Adopt-A-Park/Trail Program



## **What is the Adopt-A-Park/Trail Program?**

Durham Parks and Recreation's Adopt-A-Park/Trail Program is designed to encourage the community to work hands-on to help keep Durham's parks and trails clean and attractive. This program creates a framework under which citizens and citizen groups/agencies or organizations can contribute to the City by "adopting" a section of a City trail or park, and agreeing to improve it through litter pick-up, maintaining flower beds, painting, spreading playground mulch and other safety surfacing and other manual labor. The program also offers the opportunity for people to get more involved in their community in a way that promotes civic pride, appreciation and awareness.

Currently Durham Parks and Recreation manages approximately 1,800 acres of parkland, nearly 70 parks and over 15 miles of trails. Since 2003 community groups have adopted parks and trail segments in Durham through the Adopt-A-Park and Adopt-A-Trail (APAT) program. The assistance we receive from adopters' is invaluable as we make every effort to care for our natural resources.

## **Who can participate?**

The APAT program is open to any individuals, youth groups, neighborhood associations, civic groups, faith based organizations, athletics organizations, service organizations, schools (groups and teams) business and other community organizations throughout the City of Durham that are interested in bettering our parks and trails.

The City of Durham Parks and Recreation Department (DPR) and the City's General Services Department provide routine park maintenance and repairs. The adopting individuals and organizations give the park or trail the extra care and attention it needs. Adopters share in improving and enhancing the City's parks and trail system by working on a variety of approved projects. Adopters have assisted with numerous cleanup, landscaping and facility improvement projects.

## **What is the Adopt-A-Park time commitment?**

Each year, the adoption commitment begins in January and concludes December 31 of that year. Adopting individual/organizations are asked to make a one-year commitment to their park or trail completing a minimum of six (6) projects per year. However, applications may be taken during the year and the number of expected cleanup project may be prorated according to the adoption approval date. It is each Adopted Park's contact person's responsibility to organize six yearly clean-ups and keep track of the group's total volunteer hours and clean-up supplies, which are provided by DPR for each Adopted Park. In addition, it is the responsibility of the Adopted Parks' contact person to:

- 1) Inform the APAT Coordinator of your scheduled cleanup date no less than two (2) weeks in advance so that arrangements can be made for trash removal, and we can let you know of any potential conflicts;
- 2) Pick up litter/debris and place the filled trash bags in the designated areas;
- 3) Adhere to the Safety Guidelines as provided to you by the APAT Coordinator;

- 4) Report any vandalism or potential safety hazards found in your adopted space;
- 5) Complete and return APAT Progress Report, Volunteer Applications, and Volunteer Service Record within 14 days of project completion. These can be returned in person, by mail or electronically.

### **What about Special Projects?**

In addition, any requests to perform special projects that will materially change adopted space, such as landscaping or facility improvements, should be submitted to the APAT Coordinator in writing at least one month in advance of the desired project date. We are excited that you wish to improve the park, and we want to work with you to ensure that your efforts leave a lasting positive effect. The appropriate City departments will review your request to ensure that the project complies with applicable safety, environmental, and legal restrictions, that it is consistent with the overall design, use, and maintenance of the park or trail, and that the date does not conflict with activities scheduled for the facility. The APAT Coordinator will respond to your organization with required guidelines for that special project.

### **What about equipment?**

DPR provides trash and recycling bags, recycling information, safety guidelines, and trash removal. We also have "grabbers", safety vests and work gloves available for checkout with a \$50.00 refundable deposit. This deposit may be waived if a written request is received 14 days prior to the scheduled project date and approved by the department's director or designee.

### **How will my adoption be recognized?**

After a successfully completed 12 months of service and a renewal of the adoption a sign will be displayed in a prominent part of the adopted park or trail acknowledging your organizations/individual service to the parks/trails system. Adopters can also be issued Certificates of Appreciation, have their agency/organization or individual name highlighted on DPR's web site and letters of recognition written on behalf of the adopter by the department's director.

### **How do I get started?**

If you are a group, appoint a contact person to ensure clear communication. Contact the Adopt-A-Park and Adopt-A-Trail program coordinator to discuss the parks and trails currently available for adoption and any questions you may have about the program. Complete the Adopt-A-Park/Adopt-A-Tail Adopting Application with the APAT Coordinator for the specific park or trail you wish to adopt. Register your volunteers, contact the coordinator to schedule your first event and reserve any equipment or supplies you may need. At the event, review the Safety Guidelines and instructions for where to leave trash and recycling with your volunteers.

Complete your project and submit progress report. You're on your way!

Attachments:

1. Adopt-A-Park/Adopt-A-Trail Policy
2. Adoption Application
3. Safety Guidelines
4. Volunteer Application
5. Adopt-A-Park/Adopt-A-Trail Progress Report
6. Volunteer Service Record