



Adopt-A-Park Handbook

Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in becoming a park adopter through the Tinley Park-Park District! The success of our parks depend on the public functioning as stewards of our facilities; with your help we will continue to make Tinley Park a beautiful place to live, work and play!

What is the Adopt-A-Park Program?

The Adopt-A-Park Program is an opportunity for neighborhood groups, regular park users and nearby residents and community partners to work together along with the Tinley Park-Park District to improve and maintain neighborhood parks. Park adopters serve as a key community representative for the park by making an ongoing commitment, organizing a community-based volunteer group and by being inclusive, encouraging and welcoming to all park stakeholders.

Partners bring much-needed volunteers, in-kind donations, and private resources to the parks. We recognize that partnerships bring more than resources; they also build ownership, encourage enthusiasm and passion that partners have for the parks they treasure, and bring greater effectiveness, innovation, and creativity to the park system.

What are the Roles in the program?

Tinley Park-Park District

- Provide oversight
- Review and collaborate on volunteer and park improvement projects
- Communicate about plans for the park
- Provide planting materials and supplies
- Provide technical assistance and education

Adopt-A-Park Partner

- Organize a family/commercial/community-based group to assist in park needs
- Serve as a community stakeholder for the park
- Report unsafe conditions, vandalism, suspicious activity at the park, etc.
- Work to improve and maintain the park with organized clean-up and maintenance work

What are the Benefits?

Tinley Park-Park District

- Can allocate additional resources to other projects and agency needs while keeping our aesthetic standards
- Create community stakeholders taking pride in their local parks

Adopt-A-Park Partner

- Provide community service in the areas they live and work

- Receive a sign placed in the adopted flower box (or similar area based on park location) naming the Adopt-A-Park Partner
- *Family Park Adopt-A-Park Partner-receive one reduced park pavilion rental per park adopted (i.e., Smith Family)
- *Business Adopt-A-Park Partner - receive one reduced park pavilion rental per business/park adopted or one reduced room rental (i.e., Your Business Name)
- *Community Adopt-A-Park Partner - receive free/reduced room space (frequency based on number of parks adopted and subject to availability) (i.e., Scout Group 12345 adopts one park will have use of one room, for 2 hours, per month. Room may not be available on same day/time each month)

**Tinley Park-Park District facility/pavilion rentals and programming needs take priority. Adopt-A-Park Partner space usage is subject to room/pavilion availability and established usage rules and guidelines; room reservation requests are accepted beginning four months prior to the date of rental.*

What is expected?

Adopter's Responsibilities

- Adopt-A-Park for 1 year (will have the ability to renew upon completion of the year if mutually agreed upon)
- Attend park needs (weeding, mulching, litter removal, etc.) a minimum of two times per month between April-October (groups arrange their work days and do not need to contact the Park District)
- Plant and maintain park flower box (flowers/plants provided), weeding and watering as needed
- Additional items can be discussed based on park location and needs of the Adopt-A-Park Partners or Tinley Park-Park District
- Based on needs/wishes of Adopt-A-Park Partner, additional assistance opportunities may arise such as removal of invasive species, habitat restoration, playground surface maintenance, etc.
- In the event the Adopt-A-Park Partner failure to maintain park for the duration of time specified, but utilized pavilion/rental portion of agreement, the Adopt-A-Park Partner must reimburse the Tinley Park-Park District for man hours used for park upkeep and/or payment for pavilion/rental fee based on their use (2 visits per 7 months (April-October) for 2 Park Staff at 2 hours each= \$840)

Tinley Park-Park District Responsibilities

- Assign park to each group; specific location requests will be considered
- Provide educational directives prior to season beginning
- Provide a list of approved Adopt-A-Park Partner activities that may be conducted in their park maintenance responsibilities. All other projects require written permission from the Tinley Park-Park District
- Place an ad in one seasonal brochure thanking our Adopt-A-Park Partners with highlights of the past year's accomplishments
- Book pavilion or room space according to group and agency needs based on guidelines of room rentals and must be arranged with the Superintendent of Recreation, 708-342-4200.

When does the program start?

Complete the application now, parks are limited in availability and are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. The program begins in April; look for more details to follow. An education meeting will be planned for the park coordinator if needed. A planting weekend (s) will be established for flower/plant delivery to your adopted park from our Parks Department for the flower box. Throughout the Adoption cycle, Park District staff may be in contact for additional park needs.

What is Provided-Cleaning Supplies/Tools

Trash Bags, garbage pickers, water container and other small supplies may be made available to the organizing groups for use during their agreement period. The organizing groups shall provide additional items such as gloves/rakes etc. Upon completion of the terms of agreement, the organizing group shall return any supplies provided by the Park District.

Volunteer and Safety Rules & Procedures

1. One adult must accompany every eight workers under age 18
2. A written waiver and release will be needed from each group/person assisting in the park maintenance
3. For the protection of all workers, appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn
4. Sandals/open toed shoes are prohibited while working at the park
5. Drinking water and a first aid kit should be provided by volunteer organizations during all Adopt-A-Park Partner volunteer work periods
6. Adopt-A-Park Partner volunteer are prohibited from bringing pets to work at the park
7. Work must be done during daylight hours
8. All participants are to follow park rules and regulations
9. Inappropriate behaviors during the clean-up procedures will not be tolerated. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages while working are prohibited
10. Adopting groups will not remove any large or hazardous items. Items will be tagged, and group will contact the Tinley Park-Park District for removal
11. Work will be done on Tinley Park-Park District property only
12. Please return any valuables found to the Park District Main Office
13. Tinley Park-Park District has the right to terminate agreement if Adopting group fails to follow terms and agreement of the program

Volunteers work under the oversight of Tinley Park-Park District staff. Tasks typically fall into the category of basic maintenance, and most projects are very low risk. Risk is carefully managed and minimized. The Tinley Park-Park District **does not** allow volunteers to use power tools or chemicals, nor allow volunteers to do tree pruning or other tree work, including but not limited to, fertilizing, air spading, deep root fertilization etc. Mulching and root collar clearing may be done by volunteers with coordination and oversight from the Parks Staff of the Tinley Park-Park District.

How do you become an adopter?

- Complete application online at www.tinleyparkdistrict.org or email Meghan.Fenlon@tinleyparkdistrict for an application
- You will be contacted within ten business days to let you know if your application was approved and for additional details regarding the partnership.
- Call 708-342-4200 with any questions

Program Coordinators

Ryan Veldman
Superintendent of Parks

Meghan Fenlon
Superintendent of Recreation

Thank you!

***We appreciate your time and dedication to the park and green spaces of the Tinley Park-Park District!
The work you do makes Tinley Park a beautiful place to live, work, and play!***