

Adopt-a-Site Program

Ryan Fitzgerald

Overview

The Adopt-A-Site Program is a community partnership initiative that invites residents, businesses, schools, and organizations to help care for public green spaces throughout the City of La Crosse. Through this program, volunteers “adopt” a park, trail segment, natural area, garden bed, or other public space and assist with routine stewardship activities that keep these places clean, welcoming, and environmentally healthy.

La Crosse’s parks and natural areas are an important part of the community’s identity and quality of life. From neighborhood parks and riverfront spaces to scenic trails and natural habitats, these areas provide opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and connection with nature. The Adopt-A-Site Program helps ensure these spaces remain vibrant and well-maintained by encouraging shared responsibility between the city and its community members.

Participants in the program commit to supporting a specific site for an agreed-upon period, in this case 2 years. Each year, 3 cleanup dates are scheduled and completed between April and the end of October, typically through activities such as litter cleanup, light landscaping, monitoring, or seasonal beautification. Volunteers work in coordination with the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department to ensure that efforts align with city standards, safety guidelines, and environmental stewardship practices.

Goals

1. Provide more flexibility for the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department’s workforce by allowing for some general cleaning and maintenance to be accomplished by local organizations looking to make a difference.
2. Get the La Crosse community more involved in green spaces around the city.
3. Over time, reduce expenses related to the regular maintenance of these park spaces.
4. Create mutually beneficial partnerships between the City of La Crosse Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Dept. and various local groups.

What is included in the project?

- Research on other Adopt-a-Site programs
- List of recommended park sites, site maps, and tasks needed at sites
- Staff workflow structure and adopting process from start to finish or renewal
- Recognition and Marketing plan
- Application form and Liability Waiver
- Terms and Conditions/Adopting Expectations document
- Online version of application and online post-cleanup report to be used on the city website
- Promotional/marketing materials including a flyer, social media post with caption, and an initial design of adoption signage that could be implemented in the future at adopted sites.

Adoption Group Pilot

The La Crosse Loggers have tentatively agreed to adopt Copeland Park as a pilot organization for the program, and I am in contact with them at the moment finalizing the details.

Copeland Park

- Park wide litter/trash pick-up.
- Weeding at mulched or landscaped garden beds, and under signage.

Thank you!

If you have any additional questions or concerns following the April 16th Parks Board of Commissioners meeting, please do not hesitate to reach out to me, Ryan Fitzgerald, via email at fitzgeraldr@cityoflacrosse.org prior to the end of my internship, which concludes on April 24th.