



Legislation Text

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Title

Volunteering in Parks

Body

Volunteers are an important part of Madison Parks system. They complete important tasks such as the removal of invasive plants, beautification, providing new amenities and programs, conversation, litter pick up and more. Different volunteer groups require different levels of resources from Parks staff. All section of the Division support volunteers at some point. In general, volunteer projects tend to be either maintenance based or requesting a permanent installation/change. In 2015, an extensive engagement effort occurred with volunteers including online surveys and roundtable meeting. Several positive items were implemented and have improved the volunteer program. Engagement and management of volunteers with limited Park resources is an ongoing evolution and area that would benefit from LRP support.

Many different types of volunteers at Madison Parks:

- o One time or a few times per year groups (corporate, students, non-profits)
- o Friends of Groups
- o All the time volunteers (Si)
- o Earth Day Challenge
- o Flower Group
- o Adopt Ice Rink
- o Conservation
- o Volunteers who want to install items in the park (bird house, rain garden\

Considerations in working with volunteers:

- o It is important for Park staff to be on site with most volunteer groups for training, safety and creating a welcoming environment (especially one-time volunteers).
- o Volunteers often in parks after standard work hours or on weekends, which require overtime from parks staff.
- o How do we include equity into the volunteer program? Often those who volunteer are in neighborhoods that already have the most resources.
- o Would be beneficial to map the volunteer efforts.
- o Could we list the time-sensitive vs. not time sensitive projects to have a running list of volunteer projects? Staff may complete volunteer-type projects when they are time sensitive.

- o Conservation volunteering around monitoring in parks is needed. Seasonal changes impact when certain volunteer efforts are needed.
- o Develop a clearer distinction of roles and expected timeline for answers/execution to help with communication while still being responsive to opportunities.