

JOHNSON COUNTY, IOWA SECONDARY ROADS DEPARTMENT

GUIDELINES FOR THE ADOPT-A-ROADWAY PROGRAM

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objective of this voluntary program is to increase public awareness of the environmental and maintenance needs along Johnson County's roadways by using adopted sections of roadsides as an example of the opportunities available for the public to improve the condition and appearance of our County.

GENERAL STATEMENT

There is a clear need to improve the quality of our roadsides. This improvement may take the form of litter pick-up, wildflower and native prairie plantings, preservation of existing native plant communities, landscaping or erosion control projects, the improvement of wildlife habitats and the control of invasive weeds or brush within the right-of-way. These activities are generally labor intensive, expensive and often considered as a lower priority to pavement maintenance or public safety needs. In order to provide the most effective management of County roadside areas, participation by public service and private groups should be encouraged.

The Adopt-A-Roadway Program allows groups or individuals to adopt a specific section of a County road. Through this adoption they may assume responsibility for any or all of the eligible items listed below. The available activities have the potential to:

- a) Reduce litter along Johnson County's roadways
- b) Enhance the environmental quality and beauty of our roadsides
- c) Build broad-based community support for anti-litter and Iowa beautification programs

POTENTIAL ADOPT-A-ROADWAY ACTIVITIES

The following activities are eligible to be included in Adopt-A-Roadway sponsorships:

- a) Litter pickup
- b) Participation in wildflower and prairie grass plantings
- c) Assist with the design or improvement of native prairie sites or wildlife habitat areas
- d) Landscaping and landscape maintenance
- e) Hand weeding of sensitive areas to improve environmental quality

IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

ADULT SUPERVISION: Any child volunteer or worker under age 16 must have an adult on-site to supervise their work. The required ratio is at least one adult for every four children.

LAND MONUMENT: Government or other permanent survey markers that have been placed within the right-of-way.

LIABILITY: Responsibility; being in a position to incur financial or other obligations according to law or equity.

NOXIOUS WEEDS: Those plants listed under the Iowa Weed Law and which have proven undesirable characteristics or interfere with agriculture or human health.

PRAIRIE: A diverse and increasingly rare native plant community dominated by grasses and associated plants that provide a perennial groundcover in open areas.

WETLANDS: Sensitive areas in which native plant communities and soils are periodically saturated with water and which serve as important hydrologic features of the landscape.

RIGHT-OF-WAY: That portion of roadway and adjacent ground, to a width defined by survey which the governmental unit that has control over the roadway either owns or has an easement allowing access and use.

SENSITIVE AREAS: Those sites where endangered vegetation or desired plant species or biologic communities are to be preserved or where conditions exist that prevent access without degrading the existing groundcover or soil stability.

SPONSOR: The adjacent landowner, governing body of a community, organization, club or individual that voluntarily contracts to adopt a roadway within Johnson County.

WILDFLOWERS: Those flowering plants native to a given area, growing without cultivation and which present desirable or attractive displays when in bloom.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Johnson County Roadside Vegetation Manager will work with the adopting group to determine the specific section of roadway to be adopted and the priority needs for the given site.

The sponsor will be made aware of the problems that can occur along roadways and will be expected to instruct their personnel in safety precautions. Whenever possible, the sponsor shall secure access to their site from off the right of way rather than from the road surface or shoulders as a safety precaution.

It shall be the sponsor's responsibility to obtain and assure use of signs, safety vests and other items from the Roadside Vegetation Manager and to return materials to the Manager upon completion of work.

All sponsors and participants shall agree to indemnify and hold harmless Johnson County, its Board of Supervisors, its officers and employees from all liability, judgment, costs, expenses and claims growing out of damages or alleged damages of any nature whatsoever to any person or property arising from the performance or non-performance of any roadside work.

Sponsors agree that in the performance or non-performance of any work within the right-of-way that they are initiators and volunteers and are in no way to be considered employees of Johnson County.

First preference for adoption of any section of roadway will be given to adjacent landowners. Second preference will be given to the governing bodies of local communities or urban areas. The third preference shall be given to organizations, clubs or individuals.

Sponsorship shall be for a period of two (2) years and in areas of not less than one (1) mile. If litter pick-up is involved it must include both sides of the designated roadway section.

Sponsorship will not be granted to political parties, political candidates, elected officials, or entities which would constitute any partisan endorsement.

A sponsor may adopt only one entryway into a city.

Litter must be removed a minimum of twice yearly dependent upon the area and conditions.

It shall not be the responsibility of the sponsors to pick up litter from road surfaces or from within four (4) feet of the road surface.

Parking upon the road shoulders while doing litter pick-up or other projects shall be prohibited.

All program participants shall be required to wear orange safety vests while working within the right-of-way.

Sponsors of plantings or landscape maintenance projects or native seed harvest sites shall control noxious weeds as necessary using County approved methods before the weeds produce seed.

All plant species to be used in landscape and prairie planting projects must be approved by the Johnson County Roadside Vegetation Manager prior to placement within the right-of-way.

All seed harvested from County roadsides must be reseeded back onto public lands within the County. Seed harvested from the right-of-way shall not be sold.

If, in the sole judgment of the Johnson County and the County Roadside Vegetation Manager, it is found that the sponsor is not meeting the terms and conditions of the agreement, the County may terminate the agreement at any time.

JOHNSON COUNTY RESPONSIBILITIES

The County shall be responsible for:

- a) Furnishing advance traffic warning signs to be used in all adopted areas during sponsored activities.
- b) Providing trash bags, orange reflective safety vests, safety literature and other materials to assure public and sponsor safety on the worksite.
- c) Removal of filled trash bags upon completion of litter pick-up projects and upon notification by the group sponsor.
- d) Removal of large, heavy or hazardous items discovered within an adopted roadside section.
- e) Providing educational assistance, training or other supervision deemed necessary to assure successful completion of sponsored activities.
- f) Coordination of efforts to obtain publicity and recognition for completion of sponsored activities.

PROCEDURE FOR ROADWAY ADOPTION

- a) A representative of an interested group or individual should contact the Johnson County Roadside Vegetation Manager at the County Secondary Roads Department, 4810 Melrose Ave. West, Iowa City, Iowa, 52246, or by telephone at (319) 356-6046.
- b) The County Roadside Vegetation Manager will explain the Program and will provide a sponsorship application.
- c) The sponsor should select the location desired, complete the sponsorship application and return it to the County Roadside Vegetation Manager for review and approval.
- d) The County Roadside Vegetation Manager will provide training or other information necessary as well as appropriate safety items as needed and assist in coordinating activities for the sponsoring group.
- e) It is the sponsor's responsibility to notify the Secondary Roads Department 72 hours prior to project activities, to obtain and use required safety equipment and to notify the Department within 72 hours of completion of work to assure prompt return of safety items and litter bag removal.
- f) It shall be the sponsor's responsibility to provide a \$25.00 refundable deposit upon picking up safety signs and materials from the Secondary Roads Department. These items must be returned to the County within 72 hours of project completion to allow their use by other groups.

- g) The sponsor shall insure that all workers will be properly equipped and will follow prescribed safety procedures while on the worksite.
- h) The sponsor will collect litter in the furnished orange trash bags and place them off the road surface adjacent to a pre-arranged site designated by the County for pick-up.
- i) The County will pick up the filled trash bags upon completion of a scheduled clean-up and upon notification by sponsors. The County will also be responsible for removal of any large, heavy or hazardous items discovered at the site.

SAFETY RULES FOR ADOPT-A-ROADWAY PROGRAM

Johnson County's new Adopt-A-Roadway Program has been established to offer members of our community the opportunity to help restore the quality of our roadside environment. Since this process will involve placing volunteer groups within the rights-of-way, it is necessary for us to abide by certain safety rules. This sheet contains a list of these safety rules as well as some suggestions for making the job as easy for the workers as possible. Please help us by following the enclosed guidelines when in the field.

As a part of the sponsor's obligations it is important that a safety meeting be held prior to each scheduled work day. This is also a good chance to organize crews and delegate jobs. The County will be glad to advise you and will assist whenever possible.

THE FOLLOWING RULES SHALL APPLY TO ANY CREWS INVOLVED IN ANY PROJECT WITHIN THE COUNTY RIGHT-OF-WAY:

1. All roadside workers will wear orange reflective safety vests while in the field.
2. One adult supervisor will be provided for each four youths (under age 16) working in the field.
3. All vehicles will be parked away from the traveled road surfaces. Parking permission should be arranged with adjacent landowners if possible.
4. Work by volunteers will not be allowed in project areas if any construction work is in progress.
5. Advance warning signs will be posted at both ends of the work site prior to start of activities by the sponsor, will be removed after work is completed and will be returned to the Secondary Road Department.
6. Heavy or hazardous objects discovered will be removed by the County workers and should be left in place by volunteers until the objects can be properly removed.
7. A pre-work site survey should be conducted by the sponsor to determine presence of hazards or dangerous conditions.

8. For health and safety reasons, volunteers should dress properly. Such clothing should include: Hats or caps, gloves, long-sleeved shirts, leather boots or sturdy shoes and if possible the clothing should be light or brightly colored to increase visibility to motorists.
9. Filled trash bags are to be placed only at pre-determined sites for later pickup by County employees.
10. Volunteers are not expected to pick up litter from medians or to provide maintenance in trafficked areas. Work should not be done within four (4) feet of the road surface at any time.
11. Be careful if using a litter pick-up stick to prevent injury.
12. Work should be stopped and crews should leave the site in the event of any inclement weather.
13. Workers should plan their activities so they will face oncoming traffic as they proceed along the right-of-way.
14. Sponsors are responsible for the health and safety of their crews. It is important to have water or other refreshments available and to have a first aid kit. It is a good practice to be able to contact emergency services in the event of an injury.
15. Working with plants within the right-of-way may expose crews to poisonous weeds or insects. It is a good idea to know of any allergies or problems ahead of time and avoid areas that are densely overgrown if possible.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE WORKING IN A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ENVIRONMENT--A PUBLIC HIGHWAY.

REMEMBER THAT WHATEVER YOUR PROJECT, YOU MUST BE PREPARED FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF AN EMERGENCY.

THE GOAL OF OUR PROGRAM IS TO ALLOW PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR ROADWAYS. YOUR SAFETY IS OUR MOST IMPORTANT CONCERN.

FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE, CONTACT THE JOHNSON COUNTY SECONDARY ROADS DEPARTMENT AS FOLLOWS:

CHRIS HENZE
ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGER
4810 MELROSE AVE WEST
IOWA CITY, IA 52246
319-356-6046

APPLICATION TO ADOPT-A-ROADWAY
JOHNSON COUNTY ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

SPONSOR NAME (Organization, Group, or Individual) _____

MAILING ADDRESS (Street, P.O. Box, City, State and Zip Code) _____

SPONSOR TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

THE PROPOSED WORKSITE IS LOCATED AT:

TOWNSHIP NAME _____

ON COUNTY ROAD _____

COMMENCING AT _____

AND TERMINATING AT _____

APPROVAL IS HEREBY REQUESTED TO ENTER WITHIN THE ABOVE NAMED COUNTY ROADWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY TO PERFORM THE FOLLOWING WORK:

Check (√) all that apply:

_____ LITTER REMOVAL

_____ HARVEST OF SEED

_____ WILDFLOWER PLANTING

_____ HAND WEEDING

_____ PRAIRIE MAINTENANCE

_____ LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE

AGREEMENTS:

The sponsor(s) agree that in granting of a permit to do said work, the following stipulations shall govern:

- 1) This application shall be approved prior to commencement of any operations as requested herein.
- 2) Sponsors shall agree to indemnify and hold harmless Johnson County, its Board of Supervisors, officers and employees from any and all liability or judgment, costs, expenses and claims growing out of damages or alleged damages of any nature whatsoever to any person, property or third party arising out of the performance or nonperformance of work within the right-of-way.
- 3) No vehicles, equipment or materials are to be parked or stored on the public right-of-way.
- 4) Right-of-way markers, posted traffic signs and land monuments shall not be removed, altered or damaged.
- 5) This permit shall be subject to any applicable laws, rules and regulations of Local, State and Federal agencies.

- 6) The sponsor agrees to give the County at least 72 hours notice of intent to start project operations. Notification shall be made to the Johnson County Roadside Vegetation Manager and to the Johnson County Secondary Roads Department.
- 7) All sponsored groups will be required to obtain and use prescribed safety equipment and materials from the Secondary Roads Department and to return signs, safety vests and unused materials to the Department office within 72 hours after work completion.
- 8) A refundable deposit of \$25.00 shall be required as a security for materials obtained from the Department. This deposit shall be refunded immediately upon return of said materials to the Department.
- 9) The sponsor shall carry on the work as required and authorized by this agreement with serious regard for the safety of the traveling public, adjacent property owners and of the volunteers or employees of the sponsor. Traffic protection shall be in accord with Part VI of the current manual on *Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways*.
- 10) The sponsor acknowledges that all personnel involved in this project are initiators and volunteers directed by the sponsor and that the sponsor accepts full responsibility for any injuries or damages sustained or caused by such personnel. The sponsor acknowledges that they or their volunteers are in no way to be considered employees of Johnson County or the Department of Secondary Roads.
- 11) The sponsor acknowledges that this is a binding contract and that the sponsor has received valid and sufficient consideration. Said consideration shall include but not be limited to positive publicity and other recognition arranged with the assistance of the County Roadside Vegetation Manager.

In consideration of the above, the sponsor and Johnson County further agree to abide by the terms and conditions listed in this application and in the Guidelines for the Adopt-A-Roadway Program as supplied with this form.

Johnson County reserves the right to deny or revoke sponsorships that might be deemed as partisan endorsement or have an adverse effect on the overall program.

Johnson County also reserves the right to terminate this agreement when in the sole judgment of the County it is found that the sponsor has not met the terms of this agreement.

This agreement shall remain in force from _____, 20_____ until _____, 20_____. If this agreement includes litter removal, the sponsor agrees to pick up litter _____ times per year.

APPLICANT _____

BY _____

ADDRESS _____

DAY TELEPHONE _____

EVE TELEPHONE _____

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

BY _____ DATED _____