



## MSU Extension Master Gardener Adopt-a-Park Short-term Garden Adoption Activity

There are over 60 gardens in our Ann Arbor city parks – including landscaping, flower beds, and native gardens – all of these spaces require ongoing care and maintenance! We are looking for Extension Master Gardener volunteers interested in adopting one of our park gardens for at least one month and up to a full season. This is a great opportunity for EMG volunteers who are looking to gain meaningful gardening experience in a public garden, would enjoy interacting with the Ann Arbor community, and want to fulfill between 15 and 40 volunteer hours on one project. By volunteering for this activity, EMGs will lend their invaluable knowledge and experiences to a public garden space and share it with the community.

The EMG will be responsible for the garden's care for the duration of their commitment. This will include independent work sessions and at least one public volunteer event co-led by the staff Gardener and EMG. Adopting a park garden will also include coordinating with the Adopt-a-Park Coordinator and staff Gardener to develop a workplan.

### DURATION

The duration of the garden adoption and number of volunteer hours will vary based on the specific garden and amount of maintenance needed. The number of total volunteer hours provided for this opportunity is between 15 and 40. The time span will depend on the number of volunteer hours needed by the EMG, their availability, and time of year - but will be at least one month and up to six months. Independent work sessions are flexible and can work around the EMG's schedule. This volunteer opportunity will be closed November through March.

There may be an opportunity for EMG volunteers to retain their garden adopter role at the same site year-after-year. EMGs are welcomed and encouraged to inquire about continuing to adopt the garden after their hours have been completed.

### WORKPLAN

The EMG volunteer will work with the Adopt-a-Park Coordinator and staff Gardener to choose a garden based on available spaces, number of volunteer hours needed, and season. The EMG will go through an onboarding process including a tour of the garden to discuss its current condition and to identify maintenance and improvement needs. The EMG will develop a brief written workplan and will have the opportunity to suggest improvements, including proposed plantings. All work performed in the adopted garden must be approved before taking place.

Tasks the EMG should expect to work on to maintain their garden include weeding, watering, mulching, planting, pruning, and more.

**LONG TERM PARTNERSHIPS | SPECIAL PARK PROJECTS**



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[A2GOV.ORG/ADOPT-A-PARK](https://a2gov.org/adopt-a-park)



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## PUBLIC VOLUNTEER EVENT

The public volunteer event will be a two-hour event open to public volunteers and will provide support to the EMG on tasks in the garden such as weeding and spreading mulch. The EMG will work with the staff Gardener to decide a task list for the workday. The EMG will help to lead the workday by briefly describing the Master Gardener program (if desired), sharing their experience with their adopted garden, and talking about the plant species and their ecological benefits. They will also demonstrate tasks, provide support to the volunteers during the workday, and work alongside them.

Additional volunteer events are possible if more support is needed in the garden

## FUNDS AND SUPPLIES

All materials needed for projects on the workplan such as soil, compost, and mulch, will be provided by Adopt-a-Park. If additional plants are needed to fill in or otherwise improve the adopted garden, species selection will be a collaboration between the EMG and the staff Gardener. EMGs will be encouraged to suggest species that would be appropriate for the site based on their own experiences or research. Plants will be provided by Adopt-a-Park. Loaning of tools can be coordinated if needed.

## RECORDING WORK

EMG volunteers will be asked to keep track of their volunteer hours. A paper log will be provided to record date, time, and tasks performed each time the volunteer visits their adopted garden. They will also be expected to send before and after photos to the staff Gardener, and to keep in touch on any issues or support needed. All volunteers must complete our safety waiver.

EMG volunteers must report their volunteer hours in the Master Gardener volunteer portal through MSU Extension, as we do not submit volunteer hours with MSU.

Contact the Adopt-a-Park Coordinator to learn more about this opportunity, find out which garden spaces are available for adoption, and to begin the onboarding process.



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