

Village of Hastings-on-Hudson

• Adopt-a-Spot •

Program Guidebook

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I. Purpose

Mission

The mission of the Village of Hastings' Adopt-a-Spot program is to promote the involvement of the community in the upkeep and beautification of designated traffic islands, road-adjacent green spaces and sections of parks within the Village. In so doing, the program aims to improve quality of life, build community relationships and enhance local ecological well-being. The program is associated with the [Hastings Pollinator Pathway project](#), which encourages the installation of native flowering plants, shrubs and trees.

What is Adopt-a-Spot?

Adopt-a-Spot is a Village-Public partnership wherein individuals or groups can adopt a traffic island, adjacent roadway or section of public park in the Village and officially care for it. At minimum, caring for a location includes tending plants and periodic litter removal. Some locations provide the opportunity to install a garden plan of your own design. Others may be existing gardens that require maintenance, or existing gardens that require maintenance and can also be renovated or expanded. Adopters can choose from the Village's list of approved Spots or suggest a Spot of their own.

Hastings' Adopt-a-Spot program embraces and recognizes the existing networks of volunteers, sponsors, and supporting organizations that are already active in maintaining and beautifying the Village, and seeks to expand these efforts into areas lacking community support by engaging more sponsors, supporters and volunteers. With the Village coordinating and promoting efforts, residents and businesses can play a more active role in beautifying their surroundings.

II. Guidelines

Who can participate?

The Adopt-a-Spot program is open to everyone! Adopters can be individuals or groups. A group can be any collection of people, such as a family or collection of families, a group of friends or neighbors, a club, scout troop, sports team, block association, religious congregation or business association.

What are the parameters of an Adoption?

- You can adopt a Spot as a **Volunteer** or donate money to the program as a fiscal **Sponsor**.
- You begin by submitting an **Application**, providing a general idea of your intentions. Once approved, you must submit an **Agreement & Plan** and **Liability Waiver(s)**. All Agreements and Plans are subject to approval, and for a renewable one-year term. Your Spot must be in good standing after review of performance by the Village for it to be renewed. All participants must sign a waiver.
- **Volunteer Adopters** provide labor plus material and supplies for beautification activities at their specified location. Volunteers commit to a minimum of periodic litter removal and to tending plants and weeding, but they can also fulfill more ambitious goals.
- Adopter **Sponsors** agree to a lump sum donation to be used at the discretion of the Village. Sponsors may ask that funds be dedicated to a particular spot, but all decisions as to the use of the funds will be made by the Village.
- **New Gardens:** If an Adopter or Sponsor would like to propose a new garden, they must provide details in their **Plan**, including a rough garden design, plant list and maintenance plan. A minimum of 50% of planted area must be native plants, and no regulated or prohibited species may be planted. See Appendix item #2 for suggested plant list. The Hastings Pollinator Pathway volunteers are happy to offer guidance and resources.
 - Gardeners must also:
 - Maintain unobstructed sight-lines for vehicles or pedestrians
 - Check for buried utility lines with Adopt-a-Spot coordinator prior to digging
 - Comply with safety protocols as outlined in the Agreement
 - Notify all neighbors whose homes face the adopted Spot of garden plans in advance of beginning work.
- Locations are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. A list of adoptable locations is [available on the Village website](#). Potential Adopters are welcome to suggest a location not on the list.

Safety rules and requirements

All safety rules as outlined in your Agreement must be followed. Failure to abide by safety rules may terminate your adoption.

Keeping track

Volunteers are encouraged to tally donated expenses, log activities and keep track of hours worked. Quantifying involvement may help attract future funding.

Village support for work sessions

Any operations that require support services from the Department of Public Works, such as removing trash or green waste, will require coordination with the Village. DPW support services are provided at the discretion of the DPW Superintendent or their designee.

Recognition

- The Village will provide a sign in or near the adopted area identifying the Adopters.
- Adopters and their areas will be noted on the Village's website and pollinator gardens will be noted on the Hastings Pollinator Pathway website.
- At the end of a successful term in the program, a letter of appreciation and option to renew will be presented to the adopting party by the Board of Trustees.
- The Hastings Pollinator Pathway project will invite our community of volunteers to an annual potluck gathering and barbeque to celebrate their efforts, beginning .

Applications and Renewal Process

- The Village will review suitability and appropriateness of landscaping and issues of traffic or pedestrian safety. A member of the Parks & Rec Commission and a member of the Conservation Commission will review the application before the Village makes a decision.
- Locations are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. Adoptions expire on January 1st annually, but can be renewed each year.
- The Village will review renewals based on performance. If a renewal application is denied, the area may be made available for adoption by another party.
- Volunteers and Sponsors may elect to discontinue the program or change areas at the end of their adoption term. A Volunteer or Sponsor may adopt more than one area.

Ownership

Materials, plantings and any improvements that are installed in an adopted location shall become the property of the Village of Hastings in perpetuity, and constitute a non-revocable and unrestricted donation to the Village.

III. Definitions

Adopt-a-Spot Program

A Village-wide program in which individual or organizational Adopters engage in the regular maintenance and beautification of traffic islands, green areas adjacent to road-ways or sections of parks within the Village.

Application

The form initiating the Adopter's intentions to care for a Spot in the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson. The Application will specify the activities the Adopter(s) plans for the year.

Agreement, Plan & Maintenance Plan

The contractual document that details the responsibilities of an approved Adopt-a-Spot Adopter. The Agreement, Plan & Maintenance Plan follows approval of an Application and will be signed by both the Adopter and the Village.

Plan

The Plan portion of the Agreement includes the Adopter(s) planned activities for their location. Adopter(s) may **only** engage in activities listed in their Plan, but Plans may be amended or updated at any time, with Village approval.

All new garden installations must provide a plant list for approval by the Village plus a garden sketch, and all digging activities below 6" will trigger a utility-line review.

Spot

A publicly-owned traffic island, portion of a public park, or green space adjacent to a roadway designated by the Village as available for Adoption.

Park

A publicly-owned area designated as parkland by the Village of Hastings.

Group

A Group can be any collection of people, such as a family or collection of families, a group of friends or neighbors, a club, scout troop, sports team, block association, religious congregation or business association.

Adopter

A Volunteer Adopter is an individual, group or business that chooses to provide beautification efforts through their own labor and has completed the Adopt-a-Spot Application, Agreement & Plan and Waiver(s); has been approved by the Village; and has accepted responsibility for caring for a specified location. Volunteers are responsible for procuring and installing plantings, picking up trash, and maintaining plantings in their approved Spot.

Fiscal Sponsor

The Village welcomes donations to our general fund as part of the Adopt-a-Spot program. The

Village will use financial contributions toward general maintenance supplies such as mulch and paint, or to purchase improvement items off the Village Wish List, such as benches, picnic tables, trash cans, kiosks, bulletin boards, plants, trees, and other facility improvements. Sponsors may ask that funds be dedicated to a particular purpose or locations, but final decisions as to the use of the funds will be made by the Village. Sponsors do not need to be Volunteers, and Volunteers are not required to be Sponsors.

Coordinator

The Village Manager will designate a staff point-of-contact who will serve as Adopt-a-Spot Coordinator. This person will collect application forms, determine utility line reviews, help arrange trash pickup, order and supply Adopt-a-Spot signage, and provide support to Village Adopters.

Sign

A uniform sign designed and provided by the Village, located near or within the adopted area (at the discretion of the village) that will recognize the Adopter(s).

Liability Waiver

Every Volunteer in a given Spot must sign a liability waiver prior to participating. Minors must submit a waiver with a signature from a parent or legal guardian.

[Hastings Pollinator Pathway](#)

The HPP is a group of volunteers promoting and supporting the development of pollinator gardens in the Village of Hastings to provide habitat for pollinators and strengthen our regional ecological resilience. These volunteers have offered to support Adopters in their planting projects.

IV. Appendix

A. List of adoptable spots:

[Please refer to the Village website](#)

B. List of suggested plants:

- [List of native plants from DEC](#) - (not exhaustive, but has pictures)
- [List of local nurseries with native plants](#)
- [Native plants for sun](#)
- [Native plants for shade](#)
- [Native plants for birds](#)
- [DEC's NYS prohibited and regulated invasive species.](#)

You can also visit "[Choosing What to Plant](#)" on the [Hastings Pollinator Pathway website](#).

These lists are also available on the Village website:

<https://www.hastingsgov.org/beautification-committee/pages/adopt-spot-plants-pollinators>