

# KEOKUK COUNTY

## GUIDELINES FOR THE ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM

### PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The objective of the program is to create public awareness of environmental needs along Keokuk County highways by making adopted sections of roadsides an example of opportunities to improve the aesthetics of our county.

### GENERAL STATEMENT

There is a need to enhance the quality of our roadsides. This may take the form of litter pickup, wildflower and native prairie plantings, preservation and maintenance of prairie and landscaped areas, increased landscaping, prairie grass seed harvesting for replanting in the rights of way and wildlife habitat and manual weed control. These activities are labor intensive, expensive, and are necessarily second priority to pavement and shoulder maintenance and safety activities. The problems of labor, expense, and priority dictate the need for a new approach to roadside management.

The Adopt-A-Highway Program allows individuals or groups to adopt a certain highway roadside. Through adoption they may assume the responsibility for any or all of the eligible items. These activities have the potential to:

- Reduce litter along highways
- Enhance the environment and beautify roadsides
- Build broad-based community support for anti-litter and highway beautification programs

### POTENTIAL ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY ACTIVITIES

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

- Litter pickup
- Wildflower and prairie grass planting
- Planting and harvesting seed for wildlife and reseeding operations
- Hand weeding of sensitive areas
- Landscaping and landscape maintenance

### PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The County will work with the adopting group to determine the specific section of roadside to be adopted.

The sponsor should constantly be aware of problems that can be involved along highways and instruct their personnel in safety precautions. Where possible, access to highway right of way will be gained from off right

of way, rather than from roadway surface or shoulders. Plantings or harvesting will be approved by the County prior to any work being done.

Sponsors agree to indemnify and hold harmless Keokuk County, its Board of Supervisors, officers and employees from all liability, judgement, 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 roadside work.

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

First preference for adoptions will be given to adjacent property owners. Second preference to governing bodies of small communities and urban areas. Organizations, clubs, and individuals have final preference.

Sponsorship will be for a minimum of 1 mile and 2 years. If litter pickup is involved it must include both sides of the highway.

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

A sponsor may adopt only one entryway to a city.

Litter must be removed a minimum of twice per year depending on the area and conditions.

Sponsors are not expected to pick up litter in the medians, off pavement surfaces or within 4 feet of the edge of the pavement.

Whenever possible, do not park on shoulder while doing litter pickup.

All participants are expected to wear the orange/yellow safety vests when in the right of way.

Sponsors of plantings, planting or landscape maintenance or harvest areas will control noxious weeds as necessary using County approved methods before the weeds produce seed.

Plant species used must be approved by the County.

All seed harvested is to be used on public lands. Seed harvested in the right of way may not be resold.

If, in the sole judgement of the County, it is found that the sponsor is not meeting terms and conditions of the agreement, the County may terminate the agreement and remove sponsorship signs.

## **KEOKUK COUNTY/ SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **THE COUNTY AND SPONSOR WILL SHARE IN THESE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Develop a brief work plan outlining specific activities and timing.
- Secure media coverage for the program and sponsor activities.
- Coordinate work activities between the sponsor and the Maintenance Superintendent.
- Cooperate in an effort to create public awareness and support.
- Cooperate in developing beautification plans for plantings or maintenance work.

### **SPONSOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The sponsor will be responsible for:

- Conducting at least two safety meetings per year. Participants must attend a safety meeting conducted by the sponsor before participating in any roadside activity.
- Performing work in a satisfactory, safe, and professional manner in accordance with good construction practices.
- Advising the Maintenance Superintendent 48 hours in advance when litter bags are needed or when filled bags are going to be left along the road.
- Obtaining the required supplies and materials from the County during regular business hours.
- Insuring participant's 15 years of age or younger are furnished adequate supervision by one or more adults.
- Providing the County engineer with a sketch of planting locations showing distances from the highway and listing species to be used.
- Providing right of way locations and size of area to be replanted with seed harvesting from rights of way.
- Unfolding traffic control signs installed on Adopt-A-Highway sign supports when the sponsor is on the roadside and closing them after work has been completed.
- Placing filled trash bags adjacent to the Adopt-A-Highway sign for pickup and disposal by the County.
- Returning unused materials and supplies furnished by the County within one week following cleanup.
- Providing two signs with the sponsor's name. Said signs shall meet county specifications.

## **COUNTY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The county will be responsible for:

- Erecting a sign at each end of the adopted section with the Sponsor(s)'s name or acronym displayed.
- Providing reflective vests, trashbags and safety literature.
- Removing filled trashbags.
- Coordinating publicity efforts with the sponsor(s) for local media coverage.
- Removing large, heavy, or hazardous items when found on an adopted roadside.

## **PROCEDURE FOR HIGHWAY ADOPTION**

- A representative of an interested group or an individual should contact the County Engineer.
- The County Engineer will explain the program and a sponsorship application.
- The sponsor should choose a location, complete the sponsorship application and return it to the County Engineer.
- The County will erect signing identifying the sponsoring group and coordinate publicity efforts.
- The sponsor arranges to obtain trash bags and safety vests from the County and conducts a safety meeting prior to any work being done.
- The sponsor will collect litter in the furnished orange trash bags and place them adjacent to the Adopt-A-highway sign.
- The County will pick up the full trash bags.

## **COMPLETION OF THE SPONSORSHIP**

After the sponsor has performed the necessary activities, the County will, at the end of the two-year period, present the sponsor with a certificate in recognition for the work completed.