



Atlanta BeltLine Adopter's Guide

About the Adopt-the-Atlanta BeltLine Program

Through a partnership between Park Pride, the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership, and Atlanta Beltline, Inc.(ABI), the Adopt-the-Atlanta BeltLine program provides an opportunity for groups to play a direct role in maintaining the Atlanta BeltLine trail and parks along the BeltLine.

In this Adopter's Guide

This guide describes your responsibilities and expectations of the program. Please read it before your first work day and refer to it as needed. Questions? Contact Betty Hanacek: 404-546-6852, betty@parkpride.org

Section 1 – Expectations of Adopter Groups

As an adopter group, you are directly contributing to the success of the Atlanta BeltLine. To ensure success of the adoption program, please adhere to the following guidelines.

Adopter Group Composition

- Each group should consist of at least 10 volunteers to ensure an adequate workforce.
- Each group should designate a person to be the group leader and main contact for Park Pride. Please notify Park Pride if your group's main contact person changes.
- Each segment can be adopted by two separate groups who should coordinate and work together to keep the site maintained.

Orientation and Training

- Park Pride will host an orientation session on the group's adopted segment prior to their first work day. The orientation will cover expectations, safety, invasive plant removal, logistical issues, and address questions. The group leader is required to attend and additional volunteers from the group are welcome to attend.

Communication

- Groups should complete a Workday Proposal at least 2 weeks before each work day so we can assist you with planning and obtaining tools.
- Groups should complete a Work Day Report within one week after each work day.

Scope of Work

Park Pride, the Atlanta Beltline Partnership, and ABI greatly value your commitment to help make the long-term vision of the Atlanta BeltLine a reality. To stay consistent in supporting this vision, please conduct only those activities outlined in this guide unless Park Pride and ABI grant explicit approval.

Hiring Contractors

Groups may hire bonded, licensed professional contractors to perform adoption duties. The group must notify Park Pride of the name of contractor and specific work to be performed at least 30 days in advance.

On-Site Responsibilities

There are currently four general categories of work that adopter groups perform. Each segment of the Atlanta BeltLine is unique, and some will require more work in certain categories than others.

1. Trash and waste removal

Volunteer help in removing trash and debris is crucial to the Atlanta BeltLine. Your group is responsible for keeping your segment free of debris and litter on an on-going basis, so be prepared to pick up trash on each work day. Some segments may require larger-scale debris removal as well as regular trash pick-up.

Removing trash and debris from your segment

- The Atlanta BeltLine does not have public trash cans. Your group is responsible for removing any trash you pick up.
- For small scale trash pickups, you can remove what you collect and dispose of it at your own home or business. You can also seek permission from businesses along your segment and see if they will allow you to drop off collected trash in their dumpster.
- For larger-scale debris removal, Park Pride will coordinate delivery of a dumpster to your segment.
- For tires and other large items that cannot be thrown away in a dumpster, notify Park Pride of the need for a pick-up and consolidate the items into one place along your segment.
- Never touch or move hazardous materials, such as hypodermic needles. Notify Park Pride if you find hazardous materials along your segment.

2. Weed and invasive plant removal

Invasive species are a threat to Georgia's natural habitat – including the land that comprises the Atlanta BeltLine corridor. Removal of these aggressive plants reduces their negative impact. Invasive plants reproduce rapidly, choking out native plants and upsetting the natural ecology. Their removal should be ongoing, since invasive species are not easy to eradicate. However, with each work day the task should get easier and more successful. To identify invasive plants see: *A Field Guide for the Identification of Invasive Plants*: <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/35292> and *Invasive Weeds in Georgia*: <http://bugwoodcloud.org/mura/gist/assets/File/pubs/flyerfinal.pdf>

3. Cleaning signs and site fixtures

Your group is responsible for cleaning and maintaining signs, benches, and other elements installed on your segment. Wipe down each fixture with disinfectant and use graffiti remover where necessary. Please contact Park Pride with any questions or concerns.

4. Reporting maintenance concerns, vandalism, or other suspicious activities

The Atlanta BeltLine is intended to be a welcoming, vibrant, safe public greenspace. Report maintenance concerns, safety issues, and evidence of vandalism or other crime immediately and note them in your Workday Report. In the case of an immediate threat, call 911.

Additional Projects

Any project not listed above will need to be approved in advance by Park Pride and Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

Safety

It is important to ensure you are taking necessary precautions to keep your group safe. Get to know your segment- the terrain, flora and fauna, and possible hazards. Never put volunteers into a situation that is unsafe or makes them uncomfortable. A successful project is not only measured by the amount of work accomplished but also by how enjoyable it was for those involved. Here are a few guidelines for volunteers to follow:

- Do not work alone. Even if the entire group is not working together, always bring a buddy with you when working or walking your segment.
- Learn to identify poison ivy and make sure every volunteer can recognize it and avoid it.
- Know the names of streets that connect to your segment so you can direct first responders in case of an emergency.
- The project leader will determine if a project will proceed in the event of rain. If there is lightning, the project must be canceled.

What to Bring

The group leader needs to convey to volunteers what to bring on each work day. Some suggestions:

- Attire
 - Wear closed-toe shoes
 - Pants and long sleeves are recommended to avoid contact with poison ivy and limit the scratches from removing invasive plants and protecting from sunburn and bug bites
 - Dress appropriately for the weather.
- Supplies
 - Reusable water bottles (group leader should bring a water cooler to refill personal water bottles)
 - Volunteers should wear gloves- either their own or from the Atlanta ToolBank.
 - Volunteers are also encouraged to bring sunscreen and bug spray
 - Leaders are expected to bring a First Aid Kit and have it on site during all projects

Before the Work Day

Get to know your segment and potential hazards your volunteer group may face. Be aware of poison ivy, bee and wasp nests, steep slopes, boggy areas, etc. Ensure that each volunteer is aware of hazards. Park Pride can help determine appropriate projects and ensure you get appropriate tools.

- Volunteers should never feel uncomfortable with their project duties. If a volunteer has environmental allergies (i.e. bee stings) this may not be the best volunteer opportunity for them.
- Each volunteer needs to sign a Liability Waiver before participating on a work day.
- Make sure that each volunteer knows how to properly use work day tools.

Site-Specific Work Day Safety Hazards

- Steep drop-offs can be hidden by brush and over-growth – make sure every volunteer knows where they are.
- Over-hanging branches and vines. Instruct volunteers not to pull on vines or branches above them that may break and fall on them; a vine could be the only thing holding a large dead branch in place.
- For hazardous material such as hypodermic needles- do not risk injury by picking them up-note their location on the Workday Report Form so they can be removed.

Urban Camping and Homelessness

Some areas along the Atlanta BeltLine are used as dwelling places. ABI works with the Police Department to address this. While on your segment, respect the fact that you may be working in a space that someone considers their home. Do not violate an encampment or move or throw away items that may be someone's personal belongings. Contact Park Pride if you have questions or concerns regarding this issue.