

Rock County Parks Donation Policy

Approved 12-11-2012

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, standards and procedures for the installation and care of donated park improvements, either as a result of a cash or physical donation. These donations may include, but are not limited to, park benches, bicycle racks, picnic tables, grills, trail marker signs, informational kiosks, drinking fountains and other types of park amenities. This policy does not apply to buildings, land or other “large” items.

The County Parks Division desires to encourage donations while at the same time manage aesthetic impacts and consistency among the entire County Park system.

The development of public facilities is expected to be the result of careful planning and quality construction. In addition, public facilities are expected to be maintained to a standard acceptable to the community.

Guidelines established by this policy will apply to all donations made after the effective date of this policy. Donations made prior to the adoption of this policy shall be subject to applicable sections of this policy. This policy is also designed to provide guidelines for individuals or groups should they desire to decorate, landscape or adorn a donation, such as a tree, bench, or picnic table on County Park property.

This policy defines standards for donor acknowledgement plaques but does not address naming rights. The donation of park amenities does not grant the ability to name parks or amenities within the County Park system. Naming rights are addressed in Rock County Board of Supervisors resolution number 79-12B-422 approved January 29, 1980.

GUIDELINES FOR EXISTING DONATIONS

Definition of an Existing Donation: For the purpose of this policy, existing donations are those donations installed prior to the adoption of this policy.

Appearance and Aesthetics: Decoration, ornamentation, and adornment of donated elements can interfere with routine maintenance and the appearance of the donated item if not cared for on a regular basis and installed properly. Nothing shall ever be hung or tied to trees.

Decorations may be allowed on a temporary basis for a limited time if approved by the Parks Division prior to installation. These temporary decorations should not interfere with the use of nearby public space, nor represent a hazard to motorists, bicyclist or pedestrians. The donor shall remove any temporary decorations within a reasonable amount of time as they can weather, and become unattractive and detract from the image of the community.

STANDARDS FOR NEW DONATIONS

Definitions of New Donations: New donations are those made after the adoption of this policy.

Purchase: The County Parks Division and the community have an interest in ensuring that park elements purchased and installed be of high quality related to style, appearance, durability and ease of maintenance. The County Parks Division will be responsible for the purchase of all park elements.

Appearance and Aesthetics: The County Parks Division and the community have an interest in ensuring the best appearance and aesthetic quality of the public facilities. Park elements and/or their associated donor acknowledgments should reflect the character of the park or facility. All park elements will be installed in such a manner that will not substantially change the character of a facility or its intended use.

Nothing shall ever be hung or tied to trees. Additional decorations, including temporary decoration, on new donations are not allowed. Because landscaping installed in and around picnic tables and benches can be trampled, landscaping shall not be done around site furniture.

Cost: The County Parks Division has an interest in ensuring that the donor covers the full-cost for the purchase and installation. The County Parks Division may, on a case-by-case basis, establish an appropriate administrative fee of no greater than 15% of the value of the donation to coordinate the project.

Installation: Installation of donated park elements, including the donor acknowledgement/memorial plaques, will be completed by County Parks Division or others as approved by County Parks Division on a case-by-case basis. The installation will be scheduled at a time and date as determined by County Parks Division so as not to unnecessarily interfere with routine park maintenance activities.

Maintenance: Donated park elements and/or their associated donation acknowledgement, become County Park property. The County Parks Division has the duty to maintain the donation only for the expected life cycle of the donation. If current information is on file, donor will be informed and given the opportunity to take further action at the expiration of the original life cycle.

Repair: The community has an interest in ensuring that all park elements remain in good repair. The County Parks Division will make every effort to repair damaged donations and memorials. However, the County Parks Division is not responsible for replacing items, including plaques, due to excessive damage or loss. The County Parks Division will make every effort to contact the donor to inform them of the loss. The donor may replace the item and/or plaque at their own expense.

Removal and/or Relocation: This section applies to both existing and new donations. The County Parks Division reserves the right to remove and/or relocate donated park elements and their associated donation acknowledgments/memorial plaques, when they interfere with site safety, maintenance or construction activities.

The County Parks Division will send a letter to each identifiable donor notifying the donor of any action related to the disposition of the donation. In certain situations, such as safety or emergency situations, the notification may be made after the action taken. In the event a donation must be permanently removed, the County will seek an alternative location consistent with this policy.

PROCEDURE FOR MAKING A DONATION

Application: The donor must contact the Park Division to determine whether a donation may be accepted based upon criteria contained in this policy. If a donation can be accepted, the donor will complete an application form. Applications are available through the mail or in-person at the Park Division office. Completed applications shall be mailed or dropped off at the Park Division office for review and processing. Payment in full is required prior to installation.

CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE

Park Plan: To accept donation of a park element for a specific park facility, a park plan must exist showing the available locations for park elements.

If a plan exists, but does not identify a particular park element proposed for donation, the County Parks Division may accept the donation under certain conditions. Under this circumstance the donation must 1) meet a true need of the facility, 2) not interfere with the intended current or future use of the facility and 3) not require the relocation of other equipment or infrastructure to accommodate the donation.

In the opinion of the County Parks Division, a park may be determined to be fully developed and the opportunity for donations would not be available.

Donation Acknowledgements/Memorial Plaques: Donation acknowledgments and memorial plaques are to be directly affixed to the donation and/or a concrete pad below or adjacent to the donated amenity. The County Parks Division must approve all text for donation acknowledgements/memorial plaques. The plaques are to be purchased by the County Parks Division and the cost of the plaque shall be included in the donation amount. The standard is a 2" x 10" bronze plaque with up to 3 lines of text and 26 characters per line.

Notification: This criteria is a requirement for both existing and new donations. It shall be the responsibility of the donor to provide the Park Division with a current address for purposes of notification regarding their donation. For the purposes of notification, the County Parks Division will send a letter to the donor, notifying the donor of changes related to the status of their donation (i.e. a need to remove, relocate, or comply with conditions set forth in this policy).

ACCEPTABLE DONATIONS

General Park Amenities: Park benches, bicycle racks, picnic tables, grills, trail marker signs, informational kiosks, and drinking fountains may be sited in locations approved

by the Park Division in accordance with a current site master plan. Items donated must be of a product approved by the Park Division, and these items become County Parks Division property at time of purchase. The County Parks Division dictates the specifications of any donated amenity to ensure consistency among the County Park system.

Trees/Plants: The County Parks Division must approve the tree/plant species, height, and planting location. Due to concerns over maintenance and vandalism, plaques will not be included as part of the tree/plant donation program.

The County Parks Division's ability to hold quantities of plants until needed is limited. Therefore, only plant materials that can be planted at the time of acceptance are allowed. The County Parks Division may not replace trees/plants that do not survive.

Interpretive Signs: Interpretive signs may be installed at sites that are appropriate for describing the history, geology, environment, and flora or fauna of a particular area. Interpretive signs shall be of a size that is keeping with the character of the site. Interpretive signs shall be designed in such a manner that is consistent with other interpretive signs on the site and within the Park system. Interpretive signs shall be constructed of materials that are of high quality, vandal resistant, and able to withstand harsh environmental conditions.

Cash: Unspecified cash donations may be used to build, repair or upgrade existing or new facilities at the County Parks Division's discretion.

Occasionally a donor identifies a specific park for a donation, yet the park has no need for additional amenities. In this case, donors may choose to contribute funds towards maintaining an existing park amenity.

Buildings, Structures and Public Art: Donated buildings, structures (including playgrounds), public art and other larger items are subject to full review and approval of the Department of Public Works Committee and are not considered as part of this policy.

Other Donations: There may be other donations possible, other than those expressly listed or contained within this policy. The Parks Division may, at their discretion, bring any donation proposal to the Department of Public Works Committee for review and approval.