



Adopt-A-Block Handbook

The Adopt-A-Block program energizes new neighborhood volunteers to participate in community activities. Street by street, neighbors inspire each other by setting an example of environmental and community stewardship, dramatically improving their quality of life.

OUR MISSION

We engage diverse communities, to create vibrant public places, helping people and nature thrive.

- We aim to empower neighbors to bring beautification and neighborhood revitalization down to the smallest unit, the block.
- We hope to energize new neighborhood volunteers to participate in community activities.
- We build capacity for neighborhoods to create vital, beautiful greenspaces.

BLOCK CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMITMENT

Adopt-A-Block is a bi-yearly program, which means that you are your block's Captain for two years. If at any time you wish or need to end your participation for any reason, you may do so by giving us a heads up.

As a block captain, your essential duty is to maintain your block, and any storm drains with in it, free of litter and debris on an ongoing basis, to communicate with your neighbors about your efforts, and to try to get them involved as well.

Our assumption is that you will spend around 4 hours per month (except during months with bad weather) cleaning up your block and reaching out to neighbors as a part of your efforts. This may mean picking up trash daily when you return home from work, a once-a-week picweek pick-up with a few neighbors, or a larger monthly cleanup where everyone is involved.

Finally, share your efforts with us! We ask that once a month you submit an Adopt-A-Block Litter Report, which will help us understand the impact Block Captains make, where the City of Vallejo Public Works Grounds staff needs to focus, and improve the program overall.,

BLOCKS AND BOUNDARIES

The size and shape of the block you would like to adopt is entirely your choice. A block is considered to be between two streets. We may have captains that have adopted multiple blocks.

Your block boundaries: You are responsible for cleaning up both sides of your street, and the side of each alley that pertains to your block. This covers storm drains as well. If you have any questions about your boundaries, please do not hesitate to contact us!

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER & BLOCK SCORING

In the monthly newsletter, we share an array of information relevant to your work, such as news articles, online resources, and other MVP volunteer opportunities!

Along with the above, your block will be scored at least two times between May and October by MVP. We will send you a letter or e-mail whenever you are scored.

Your block is scored on a scale of 1 to 4. 1 = no litter (GOOD); 2 = some litter; 3 = moderately littered; 4 = heavily littered (NOT SO GOOD). This litter index was developed by Keep America Beautiful and is used across the country.

Your block will only be scored on the amount of litter present in the public areas of your streets and alleys (i.e. street, curb, sidewalk, and public parts of the alley). However, the inspector may also note other issues on public or private property that you may report to the Community Volunteer Coordinator, including junk; trash and debris; graffiti; high weeds and grass; etc. you will be notified of such conditions in your monthly score letter. Report these conditions to the Community Volunteer Coordinator at 707-648-8616 or on [SeeClickFix](#).

PROJECT IDEAS



NATIVE PLANT DISTRIBUTION (in partnership with local garden club/Forest Service)

At the end of each scoring season in October, your monthly scores will be averaged. If your yearly block score averages out to be a 2 or better and you come to our annual Native Plant workshop, you are eligible for free perennial flowers the following year! You will be notified of your average score and if you are eligible for flowers in advance of the flower distribution. We have distributed plants in a variety of ways (pick-up event, mailed out), so keep an eye on the Adopt-A-Block newsletter to find out the details!

Little BIG (Block Improvement Grants) Awards

This Adopt-A-Block program is a way for you and your fellow captains to get together and make your neighborhood better!

Your grant proposal can target anything that you and at least two other Adopt-A-Block Captains in your neighborhood believe will make your community better. It should be a project you can accomplish on your own with seed money grant. Maybe it's adding signage, fixing up a community greenspace, or throwing a neighborhood party. We want to hear from you about what's important to you and your neighbors!

Grant applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the Beautification Commission and City Staff. Application's will be accepted from January 1st thru March 31st.

Your committee must consist of at least three current Adopt-A-Block Captains.

The Vallejo Beautification Commission is looking for new ways to engage community members and help them increase the quality of life for everyone in their neighborhoods. Below are some examples of projects completed but use your imagination in how we can support you in making your neighborhood better!



GREAT VALLEJO CLEANUP

Great Vallejo Cleanup (GVC) is an anti-litter, community-empowering program in partnership with the City of Vallejo. We provide to people who want to lead the charge against heavy litter, illegal dumping, and debris in the public spaces in their neighborhood.

WHAT THE CITY OF VALLEJO PROVIDES

- **Cleanup supplies:** Trash bags and gloves (additional supplies available in April)
- **Free Dumpster Program Application:** In partnership with the City of Vallejo and Recology, dumpsters can be requested for your community cleanup. For more information on the Free Dumpster Program requirements click [here](#).
- **How-To Planning Guide:** We've laid out a **checklist** of what you need to run your own cleanup.
- **Media resources:** Need flyers? Social media posts? **We created a media guide to help you publicize your event.**

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

- **The desire to make a difference in your neighborhood:** You provide the labor; we provide the resources to make you successful!
- **The completed request form:** You can request two cleanups per year, April through October.
- **Your voice:** Let your neighbors know about the resources available for cleanups and send photos of your clean up events to Volunteers@CityofVallejo.net

40 Ways to Engage Your Neighbors

1. Institute Sunday evening walks in the neighborhood, where neighbors get out and walk together after dinner.
2. Hold monthly potluck brunches. One Saturday a month, have a different person host the potluck brunch in their home.
3. Have a pre-cleanup walk, where you and your neighbors walk the block and alleys to scope out what needs to be cleaned up before you do your actual cleanup.
4. Go door to door and pass out the Adopt-A-Block door hangers from MVP. When you leave a door hanger, also leave a trash bag and pair of gloves for the neighbor to get started.
5. Hold an ice cream social.
6. Walk your dog regularly, and make sure to talk to neighbors when you do so.
7. Mail nice invitations to your neighbors about your community event.
8. Clean a neighbor's yard, especially an elderly or disable neighbor.
9. Do a tool swap with your neighbors – borrow a shovel and let them borrow a rake!
10. Partner with a neighborhood school church or business and use their youth groups and staff to volunteer at your community cleanups.
11. Keep an updated roster of all Adopt-A-Block captains in your neighborhood, complete with their addresses, phone numbers and e-mails. Have a weekly or monthly cleanup and rotate show block you will work on.
12. Invite someone you want to get involved in Adopt-A-Block as your guest to the Adopt-A-Block Annual Meeting and Appreciation Dinner in March. Then get them to sign up that night.
13. Don't try to do it all in one day.
14. Wear an MVP T-Shirt when you work. It will formalize your cleanup activities.
15. Always smile and wave.
16. Meet the parents of children you would like to involve in helping to clean the street. Get their permission to include the child and explain what you are trying to do.
17. Organize a "gutter cleanup" day and take turns cleaning each other's gutters, including the gutters of elderly or disable residents.
18. Ask the children to offer refreshments at your cleanups.
19. Use blogging, Twitter and Facebook to communicate with Techno-savvy neighbors.
20. Engage institutions to help – use university students to help canvass the neighborhood and do asset mapping of your community.
21. Organize a nature walk of a nearby natural area or park.
22. Print your flyers and newsletter in both Spanish and English.
23. Hold a fish fry at a local park.
24. Invite an MVP representative to a block meeting to encourage and inspire your neighbors to get involved in cleaning up the neighborhood.
25. Ask local merchants to donate goods and service to your projects, don't be afraid to ask.
26. Clean up the yard of a vacant house or abandoned house. Pick up the trash, weed eat and mow. Your neighbors will really take notice.
27. Recruit new Adopt-A-Block captains during your annual neighborhood cleanup, if you already do one.

28. Hold monthly front porch meetings or social gatherings.
29. Organize regular morning litter cleanups, such as on Saturday mornings. Offer coffee and rolls as an incentive to participants.
30. Use your neighborhood organization as a platform to recruit more blocks to be involved.
31. Create a block roster and make sure everyone on the block has one. Include each person's address, phone number and e-mail address and make sure the list is continually updated and distributed.
32. Make personal phone calls inviting and reminding neighbors of community events, using the block roster.
33. Pass out reminder flyers a day ahead of events.
34. Ask neighbors who are already cleaning up in their yards to participate officially through Adopt-A-Block.
35. Use your school-aged children to engage other kids in the neighborhood – ask them to set an example of not littering, therefore developing a “clean” conscience on the street.
36. Have a group of neighbors watch nuisance properties and call the [Neighborhood Law Program](#) regularly to report violations.
37. Create a block newsletter, highlighting events, personal stories, and neighborhood history.
38. Form a Gardening Activity Club. Work on each other's yards or focus your energy on common spaces such as medians, neighborhood entryways or community gardens.
39. Organize a neighborhood Garden and Flower Show, where neighbors can take tours of each other's gardens, or neighbors can create competitive bouquets with flowers from their own gardens.
40. Hold a beautification contest for the most beautiful yard, - Award the “best yard” with the flowers that MVP grants every year through the Spring Flower Distribution.

CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS!

Community and Volunteer Coordinator707-648-8616

Recycling Coordinator.....707-648-5346

Public Works.....707-648-4105

Neighborhood Law Program.....707-648-4146

Code Enforcement.....707-648-4469

SeeClickFix

Abandoned/Inoperable Vehicles

Report abandoned vehicles directly to the Police Department, Traffic Division. The Police Department is responsible for handling all abandoned vehicle reports. The following are approved by the Traffic Division for filing Abandoned Vehicles on Public Property. In order to streamline the process, please choose ONE option to make your report.

Call 707-648-4682 OR Email trafficmobile@cityofvallejo.net

OR Use the online reporting tool:

<https://secure.coplogic.com/dors/startreport/100209801/100447901>

Please be prepared to provide the following information:

Vehicle Make – Vehicle color – License plate number – Location of the vehicle – Info about why the vehicle appears abandoned. Currently, there is a backlog of reports on the abandoned vehicle list, and providing detailed information to ONE of the approved reporting tools will help the Traffic Division more efficiently investigate reports.

