

Tri-Cities Beautiful



A Prospectus Outlining the Case and Strategy for
Creating and Establishing a **Keep America Beautiful** Affiliate
in the Tri-Cities Metroplex of Washington State

The Challenge

Maintain and Enhance Quality of Life in the Tri-Cities as We Grow into the 21st Century

The Columbia River Valley and the Tri-Cities Region are classically *beautiful American places*. This is indeed a fabulous place to live, start out, raise a family or retire. Thousands of residents who have stayed here or moved here over the last 50 years site the beautiful natural surroundings and the care with which we maintain and improve our neighborhoods, home sites, schools, businesses, farmlands, and public spaces as a primary inspiration in their lives and a real source of community pride.

The Tri-Cities have also developed a **positive community culture** that has sparked countless acts of voluntary citizen-involvement in activities and practices that help maintain the strong quality of life that has been established here. This spirit has filtered into areas such as the maintenance of public spaces, prevention and remediation of litter and graffiti, the establishment of positive recycling and solid waste minimization efforts at public facilities and private businesses, and the general spirit of volunteerism on behalf of the local environment and community.

However, there are challenges to this culture of care regarding our natural and neighborhood surroundings. As we grow and become more densely populated, citizen-driven community-improvement efforts that have become hallmarks of Tri-Cities life become more and more difficult for individual citizens and small neighborhood groups to organize. As we shift gradually from a small agricultural-based community to a more densely populated Metroplex characterized by rapid residential, office, and industrial development -- there is a real risk to the inspiring appearance of our community and to the quality of the natural environment we interact with on a day-to-day basis. **As the region evolves, we need an organized effort to maintain the active engagement of our neighbors in community-care activity if we are to maintain the sustainability and continuous enhancement of our unique quality of life in the Tri-Cities.**

That is why we are proposing the establishment of a Keep America Beautiful affiliate organization in Tri-Cities metroplex beginning in the fourth quarter of 2021. The organization would be locally chartered and locally run as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization emerging as a partnership of local businesses, local governments, neighborhood and community groups, homeowners associations, local families and individual citizen-volunteers.

In hundreds of communities across the nation, the local **Keep America Beautiful local affiliate** is known far and wide as a non-partisan, non-political, ever-positive and self-sustaining *force for community progress* that keeps citizens engaged in their local environment and educates neighbors on the ways we can all play a role in maintaining and improving local quality of life. **KAB affiliates bring together dedicated citizens with local business leaders, county and local government agencies and neighborhood volunteers to collaboratively make positive, joint-efforts that keep our communities thriving, beautiful in terms of their everyday appearance, and sustainable in terms of environmental quality, all of which build long term civic pride and measurable quality of life improvement.**

It is about more than just putting up litter prevention signs, arranging volunteer clean-ups, or simply distributing recycling brochures in schools and neighborhoods. A KAB affiliate is an **active, citizen-driven hub** of both volunteer and educational activity that enables all citizens to play a part in making progress happen for the community. KAB affiliates communicate positive messages that bring people together to address challenges we all face day-to-day regarding the appearance and sustainability of our natural surroundings. The KAB affiliate doesn't point fingers or assess blame (or involve itself in local political debate on *any* issue) but rather works in partnership with local businesses and government agencies in a **non-confrontational** way to promote good practices of community care and provide volunteer manpower to affect constructive environmental change.



KAB affiliate activity is cost-effective for the community, often replacing the need for public or business expenditures and preventing the needless waste of taxpayer or private-sector dollars that are often required for environmental mitigation such as when litter, graffiti or illegal dumping proliferates, or when local recycling or solid waste programs aren't functioning at peak efficiency.

That is why we contend, **now is the time for the Tri-Cities to join over 500 communities nationwide in establishing a volunteer-driven, non-political, non-profit Keep America Beautiful affiliate.** It is our hope that very quickly, **Tri-Cities Beautiful** will be the trusted *go-to* local source for applicable information and volunteer-driven programs and events that our neighborhoods, businesses and government agencies can use to **support community-appearance** and the **ongoing collaborative-care** of our local environment.

The Opportunity

What Would Tri-Cities Beautiful Do? Could it Make a Difference?

Tri-Cities Beautiful is going to be all about providing education on the local environment, inspiring the efforts of citizen volunteers, and facilitating productive partnerships among businesses, citizens and government that bring about progress for the community. Below are only some of the general programs a Tri-Cities Beautiful KAB affiliate can provide leadership on (based on the work of KAB affiliates in similar communities):

Litter Prevention

- Help organize and measure local participation in the national Great American Cleanup™ event.
- Distribute *Waste In Place* litter curriculum and activities in local schools.
- Facilitate a Cigarette Litter Prevention Program at public events in the County.
- Make litter prevention presentations to business, community and residential organizations.
- Distribute locally relevant PSAs/Social Media/Social Marketing programs around the litter issue.
- Help organizations organize and execute 'litter-free events'
- Distribute and train local developers and other contractors on the Clean Builder program
- Organize and facilitate neighborhood cleanups/education including helping secure dumpsters and other tools and equipment for volunteers.

- Organize and facilitate waterway/river cleanups/education
- Organize and facilitate Adopt-a-Spot programs at key areas in the County.
- Help VDOT make Adopt-a-Highway partnerships effective.
- Organize a trash can loaner program at locations where pedestrian litter has become an issue.
- Conduct annual surveys, generate and distribute an annual litter report card for the community.
- Organize and communicate the creation of litter free school zones in the County.
- Generate an annual litter cost study to show progress and demonstrate the need for citizen involvement to allay needless public expenditures.

Beautification and Community Greening

- Help organize and measure local participation in the national Great American Cleanup™ event.
- Distribute *Waste In Place* community beautification curriculum and activities in local schools
- Distribute *Graffiti Hurts* education materials in local high schools, youth organizations and businesses.
- Conduct Graffiti abatement events
- Create a “Paint Bank” along with County Solid Waste using discarded paints to be distributed locally and used for graffiti mitigation efforts.
- Facilitate Tree-plantings throughout the County.
- Conduct an Arbor Day event and aid other local organizations, businesses and residential organizations participate in Arbor Day plantings.
- Aid the County in conducting an Ordinance review to ensure they are working to help citizens and businesses participate meaningfully in maintaining a beautiful community.
- Help the community and local groups establish a USDA People’s Garden in the County.
- Help in the establishment of a Community/edible garden open to residents.
- Conduct Bulb planting events at important areas in the County.
- Facilitate “gateway enhancements” at borders of the region to enhance the image of the Tri-Cities as a “beautiful place” that cares for its appearance as a quality of life issue.
- Facilitate illegal sign removal programs with volunteers on rights of way.
- Facilitate local involvement in the national Tree Keepers program
- Conduct vacant lot improvement events.
- Help get volunteers involved in weed control in areas that are historically untended.

Waste Reduction and Recycling

- Help organize and measure local participation in the national Great American Cleanup™ event.
- Distribute Waste In Place waste reduction and recycling curriculum and activities in elementary and middle and high schools.
- Facilitate local participation in America Recycles Day
- Facilitate and organize materials exchange events and partnerships.
- Help educate about composting and organize and facilitate composting programs at the household, neighborhood and County levels.
- Help neighborhoods and other organizations conduct a recycling program or education event

- Facilitate Phone book, Electronics, Pharmaceuticals, Christmas tree and other bulk collections
- Facilitate Household Hazardous Waste collection
- Distribute 254 Million Tons of Trash poster locally
- Facilitate School recycling programs
- Conduct Waste in the Workplace workshops for local businesses

And What Does the Community Get?

A local KAB affiliate properly supported by local volunteers, citizen groups, businesses, and local government can be:

- a key catalyst in citizen-driven enhancement of community quality of life,
- a major factor in reducing costs incurred by businesses and local governments surrounding these key quality of life environmental issues,
- a primary contributor to local economic development and property value,
- and a key force in building long-term community cohesiveness.

What Follows in this Document

This prospectus outlines the argument for building a community coalition in the fourth quarter of 2022 to make **Tri-Cities Beautiful** come alive this Fall and begin full operations as a local non-profit organization by early Spring 2022.

For more information on the Keep America Beautiful affiliate program as well as the values and resources of the national organization, please see the information below beginning on Page 10.



Strategic Plan for Tri-Cities Beautiful

Mission of TCB

The mission of TCB is to engage residents of the Tri-Cities region to improve our neighborhood, natural and scenic environment by bringing citizens together to help care for and improve quality of life in our community.

Vision Statement of TCB

Within five years TCB will be a leading organizer and facilitator of volunteer-driven community clean-up and area improvement events in the Tri-Cities and a trusted provider of education and information covering community care strategies, litter prevention, recycling, neighborhood beautification, and public-private partnership programs. These efforts will have made measurable positive impacts on the state of our natural and scenic environment and community quality of life by having harnessed many positive efforts of households, community associations, K-12 students and teachers, local media, and community non-profits.

Core Values of TCB

Individual Responsibility: Improving the environment and quality of life of communities begins with *personal responsibility* and positive *behavioral change*—individuals becoming engaged stewards of the environment.

Citizen Education: Broad-based public education and awareness generated through positive and constructive engagement with fellow citizens form the first steps toward engendering positive community care behaviors.

Partnerships: Broad-based community alliances including public, private and civic sectors are essential to achieve sustainable community improvement.

Volunteer Action: Engaging citizen volunteers with the local environment will – more than anything else—spread the reach and multiply the impact of local initiatives that change individual behavior and improve the community environment.

Immediate Goals and Objectives of TCB

1. Launch the effort to establish TCB with a broad-based outreach and communications initiative by August 15, 2021.
2. Within six weeks of the launch of the TCB establishment effort, successfully empanel a founding Board of TCB comprised of a broad-based local coalition of committed business, government, and citizen leaders.
3. Within eight weeks begin the administrative process of establishing TCB as an approved 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
4. Within twelve weeks, establish a baseline (and publish results) on community appearance and recycling programs effectiveness in the Tri-Cities using the tools and resources provided by Keep America Beautiful including the Litter Index and others.
5. Within six months, establish affiliation with the Keep America Beautiful national organization and partnership with the Washington state community improvement organizations.

6. Within twelve months, create and establish a local brand that is known as a trusted and non-partisan source for information and volunteer-driven action to support the quality of the local environment vis-à-vis litter, graffiti, solid waste and recycling, neighborhood and public spaces beautification, and volunteer recruitment.
7. Within 18 months, TCB will have successfully engaged at least 1000 local volunteers in volunteer cleanup and public education events such as the Great American Clean-up, America Recycles, Earth Day and others.

TCB Launch Strategies Overview

1. Outreach

- a. Reach out to key allies in local County and City governments to seek board participation and startup grant funding.
- b. Reach out to key allies in state government to seek board participation and grant funding.
- c. Reach out to local business leaders through the Chamber of Commerce to seek board participation and start-up grant funding and strategic investment.
- d. Reach out to peer non-profits locally and statewide that share a primary or secondary focus on neighborhood environment, local volunteering, community improvement, etc.
- e. Reach out to local Homeowner Associations and neighborhood associations as well as known community leaders for allegiance, support and Board participation.
- f. Reach out to local editorial boards with information on the upcoming launch. **DONE**
- g. Reach out to key community leaders, local foundations and active community donors about the intent to launch TCB, and to explore resource development opportunities.

2. Logistics

- a. Establish tricitiesbeautiful.org and publish a site. **DONE**
- b. Contact Keep America Beautiful regarding intent to create TCB.
- c. Target potential board members and empanel start-up non-fiduciary “advisory board” (pre-501[c]3) by September, 2021.
- d. Solicit local business or organizations for donated or low-cost office space and key equipment (phone, computer, internet hookup, fax) for TCB during the start-up period.
- e. Solicit pro-bono legal representation for initial efforts to incorporate as a 501[c]3 non-profit organization and to affiliate officially with Keep America Beautiful.
- f. Solicit pro bono effort to create a logo and branding scheme for TCB.
- g. Solicit pro bono effort to help create and maintain the TCB internet and social media presence.

3. Start-up Public Relations

- a. Letters to the Editor and associated press releases announcing the launch of TCB, making the case for the organization and volunteer engagement. Contact regional print, electronic and broadcast media and Internet channels (local “Patch” networks).
- b. Public launch announcement event at an iconic location in the Tri-Cities. Guarantee attendance and coverage through outreach efforts (see above) and media pitches.
- c. Pitch articles/stories in local media outlets (print and electronic) regarding TCB launch.
- d. Reach out to area public and private K-12 schools with information on the launch.

- e. Plan a kickoff volunteer event in April. Within six weeks of the launch of the TCB establishment effort, successfully empanel a broad-based local coalition of committed business, government, and citizen leaders as the founding fiduciary Board of TCB.
- 4. 501(c)3 non-profit organization process.**
 - a. Establish a checklist for approval as a 501(c)3 organization.
- 5. Establish baseline on community appearance and recycling programs effectiveness in the Tri-Cities**
 - a. Perform the KAB Litter Index survey for Richland, West Richland, Kennewick and Pasco.
 - b. Work with Public Works and Solid Waste authorities to establish baselines on the current effectiveness of recycling programs in the Tri-Cities.
 - c. Distribute a survey to business and industry and schools on current recycling and solid waste practices.
 - d. Publish a white paper for key community leaders (public and private) showing the baselines for Tri-Cities appearance and recycling/solid waste indices (showing potential impact on quality of life, economic development, etc.) and showing areas where volunteer driven community support and public education programs can make positive impacts.
 - e. Establish a TCB Strategic Plan for Action based on the results of the research, surveys and feedback regarding white paper recommendations.
- 6. Begin formal affiliation procedures with Keep America Beautiful.**
 - a. Establish a KAB Affiliation procedure checklist and timetable.
- 7. Launch TCB Brand and outreach to the community and measure penetration.**
 - a. Design a comprehensive launch process for TCB targeted to county and town government, local business, schools, neighborhoods and households.
 - b. Create customized TCB-branded education materials and curricula for distribution in K-12 schools in the 2021-2022 school year as well as into HOAs and other neighborhood associations in the fall of 2021.
 - c. Conduct quarterly and annual surveys to measure penetration of the TCB brand into key constituencies and into Tri-Cities households in general.
- 8. Begin planning and rolling out communications and partnership support for at least one medium to large scale community clean-up and/or gateway beautification event in both May 2020, small scale volunteer beautification and cleanup events in the Summer, and a full schedule of events and education activities that resume in September and continue throughout the fall.**

Tri-Cities Beautiful -- Budget Assumptions Overview

TCB Launch Budget 2021-22– Expenses through 9/1/22

- Facilitate Litter/Graffiti Prevention and Community Cleanups: \$2,000.00
- Facilitate Community Beautification Events: \$2,000.00
- Create & Distribute Public Education (TCB Branded) \$5,000.00
- Stipend – Program Builder and Acting Director (30 hours/week from 8/1/21-9/1/22): \$12,000.00 Costs
- Associated with Establishment of 501(c)3 status \$1,000.00
- Rent & Office/Start-up Administrative Expenses: \$3,000.00

Total Launch Budget 2021-22: \$25,000

- Establishment Grant (Key Private Sector/Foundation Partner(s)) -- \$5,000.00 (Before 9/1/2021)
 - 2022 State Public Education Grant -- \$5,000 (Before 12/1/2021)
 - 2022 City/County Environmental Services Grant(s) -- \$6,000 (Before 12/1/2021)
 - 2022 Partnership Grants from Corporate Partners -- \$6,000 (Secured Before 12/1/2021)
 - 2022 Donations from Local Small Businesses -- \$3,000.00 (Secured Before 9/1/2020)
 - Donations from Individuals -- \$10,000.00 (After 501(c)3 approval, Goal: Secured Before 9/1/2020)
- Total Launch Revenues Anticipated 2021-22: \$35,000**

PROPOSED INITIAL TCB DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT: Evan Jones and Progressiventures, LLC

Evan Jones and Progressiventures, LLC of Richland (2621 Saguaro Way) will provide the initial energy, initiative and management behind the start-up and growth of Tri-Cities Beautiful. Once the Board of the approved 501(c)3 organization is in place, an Executive Director would ideally be hired to carry TCB forward and further staff would then be developed as resources warrant.

Progressiventures, LLC (learn-thrive.com) is a social enterprise consultancy engaged in helping bring worthy, community-based ideas to life.

Evan Jones offers 30 years of broad professional experience in the corporate, non-profit, education and public service sectors. His professional career includes 15 years in education including stints in the classroom and in school leadership as well as positions of leadership in the non-profit and corporate sectors. A former Director of Communications in the Stamford, Connecticut national headquarters of the Keep America Beautiful organization and Director of Worldwide Issues Management at International Paper Co. through the 1990s, Jones moved to the Tri-Cities in 2019 to join his wife Margaret Mitchell-Jones, recently employed as a Communications Advisor for the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL). The Jones' daughters Cassie (University of Virginia) and Emmaleah (the College of William & Mary) are both launched into their own careers and live in Australia and New York respectively.

APPENDIX: Keep America Beautiful and Community Care

Keep America Beautiful is a national community improvement organization comprised of over 500 certified state and local affiliates driven mostly by neighborhood and community volunteers. Established in 1953, KAB motivates residents, businesses, and government to work together with *positive enterprise* to create cleaner, greener and more cohesive communities, neighborhoods and public spaces. This is accomplished through diverse programs, volunteering, educational initiatives, innovative tools, public-private partnerships and creative solutions.

The ideal of keeping America beautiful is a personal commitment of citizens to choices and actions that preserve natural beauty, protect the environment, prevent blight, improve public lands, and make our communities safer and ever more positive places to live. It starts with volunteers who are locally concerned and locally active. Their efforts combine to become part of KAB's larger, national movement. Added to this is the commitment of corporate and small business partners who champion America's communities and environment through their financial support of our programs.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION MISSION

To engage individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community environment

KEY NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOCUS AREAS

Litter Prevention: Defining litter, identifying the sources of litter, understanding why people litter, reducing litter by changing littering behavior, organizing clean-ups and educating communities on proper waste handling;

Beautification and Community Greening: Improving the visual aspects of our communities through programs that beautify the environment, including community gardens, restoring vacant lots, highway and shoreline beautification, urban forests, native and wildflower plantings, and graffiti prevention and abatement; and

Waste Reduction and Recycling: Reducing the impact of solid waste in our communities through integrated programs including source reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and education about landfills and waste-to-energy.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Individual Responsibility: Improving the environment and quality of life of communities begins with personal responsibility and behavior change—individuals becoming engaged stewards of the environment.

Citizen Education: Education and awareness are first steps to encouraging positive behaviors toward community improvement.

Partnerships: Broad-based community alliances including public, private and civic sectors are essential to achieve sustainable community improvement

Volunteer Action: Engaging citizen volunteers to extend the reach and multiply the impact of local initiatives that change individual behavior and improve the community environment.

KAB RESEARCH ON THE ATTITUDE CHANGE PROCESS

For over 30 years, KAB has successfully pursued a behavioral approach to reduce littering and increase beautification and waste reduction and recycling. The five-step KAB Attitude Change System, developed through research and field-testing, was designed for KAB with Dr. Robert Allen of the Human Resources Institute. Dr. Allen and his team of behavioral scientists identified the need to change behavior as the only effective way to achieve lasting, sustainable improvement in community quality of life. KAB teaches this five-step attitude change process as a primary tool for the development and implementation of culture changing programs and projects.

1. **Get the Facts**
2. **Involve the People**
3. **Develop a Plan**
4. **Focus on Results**
5. **Provide Positive Reinforcement**

KAB Affiliate organizations incorporate these steps into every program, project, and event they get involved with. Behavior and attitude change through positive and constructive engagement is the long-term goal of every KAB affiliate. The five-step attitude change process is an invaluable tool for planning.

Get the Facts: Research the needs for your community. Interview field professionals and interested stakeholders, conduct surveys, focus groups, literature reviews, and gather data through third-party research. Then assemble all the data to help target an approach to individual and community change. For KAB's 2009, comprehensive nationwide litter and litter prevention research go to www.kab.org.

Involve the People: Identify the people who have the most influence over the identified target areas. Let them know what you would like to do. Determine how it can match their interests, and capitalize on that to develop the program. Let them involve people they know or with whom they work. The volunteer network will spread. Delegation is the key.

Develop a Plan: Once the leadership and other key individuals agree, develop a plan of action. The plan should address the who, what, where, when and why. Identify applicable tools, contacts, and resources, including those provided by KAB.

Focus on Results: The goal is to achieve measurable community improvement results. Focus on results that show a change in behavior such less litter, a reduction in graffiti vandalism, increased recycling, etc. Results may also be shown through number of volunteers, trees planted, or bags of litter collected. Identify and focus on all results.

Provide Positive Reinforcement: To motivate individuals to sustain environmental and quality-of-life changes in the community, provide regular feedback. Communicate specific and targeted results to neighborhoods, the business community, and residents. Involve the media, when appropriate, in sharing positive results more broadly. Give all volunteers and supporters of your organization appropriate recognition. People must feel positive about their efforts if they are to sustain their interest.

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT—KAB TOOLS

The primary tools KAB has developed for understanding the existing community environment are those contained in the Keep America Beautiful Community Appearance Index. Results help set goals and to develop targeted community improvement programs. The contents of the Index include:

Litter Index – The Litter Index introduced in 2000 and updated in 2010 to assess litter condition in the community.

Optional Indices for Illegal Signs, Graffiti, Abandoned/Junk Vehicles and Outside Storage – These optional indices, added in 2010, allow for a visual assessment of other community indicators.

Focus Area Survey – This is an information-gathering process that helps assess current community practices, ordinances and regulations, and resources and local contacts in each of KAB’s focus areas—litter prevention, beautification and community greening, and waste reduction and recycling.

Results from these data gathering tools will guide your efforts, pointing you to those areas that are a target for change. Gaining an understanding through research and observation of the existing environment helps to identify where there is a need for more or different techniques to address specific challenges.

After implementing programs, these same tools can help measure any improvement. Tools to measure reductions in litter, increases in recycling, and other outcomes before and after program implementation are a primary component of the KAB process.

UNDERSTANDING LITTER AND LITTERING BEHAVIOR

Litter is misplaced solid waste, which can range in size from tiny bits of paper to much larger items. To eliminate litter, KAB believes we must address littering behavior—and this tactic is supported by research. According to a series of studies conducted for Keep America Beautiful in 2009, at that time:

Litter was costing the U.S. almost **\$11.5 billion annually**; businesses paid **\$9.1 billion** of that total.

About 85% of littering at the time of that study was found to be the result of *individual attitudes toward community care and their shared responsibility*. The individual’s propensity to litter (e.g. individual “littering behavior”) was connected directly to their awareness about the negative impact of their littering and the level of care perceived in the locations they traversed. In short, if no one was actively reaching out to a person engaging them on individual responsibility regarding waste and community care, and they saw that “everyone seems to litter here” or the property owner seemed to show no concern about area quality of life – people feel more free to litter in a specific location.

Nearly one in five, or 17%, of individuals observed disposing of waste did so improperly (i.e., littered). Moreover, 81% of the littering occurred with notable intent. *People thought about where they felt free to litter*. And their actions led in a geometric progression to more litter and blight in that area or neighborhood, and a caustic cycle of observable community decline (and decrease in economic viability) would result in that specific place. In other words, litter was at or near the top of the pyramid of decline factors.

Primary Source and Locations of Litter

The 2009 series of research for KAB identified individual behavior as the primary contributor to litter. Consider these findings on roadway and non-roadway litter:

Roadway Litter: There are over 51 billion pieces of litter on U.S. roadways, 4.6 billion of which are larger than four inches. Research shows that littering along roadways is generated by individual actions:

- Motorists (52%)
- Pedestrians (22.8%)
- Improperly covered truck or cargo loads, including collection vehicles (16.4%)
- Improperly secured containers, dumpsters, trash cans or residential waste or recycling bins (1.5%)

Non-Roadway Litter: Off the roads and highways, litter originates from many sources, but primarily collects at the following locations—starting from where most non-roadway litter occurs to least:

- **Transition points** – These are entrances to businesses, transportation centers, and other places where items must be discarded before entering. Confection (candy, chocolate, gum, etc.) ranks at the top (53.7%) of what is littered at transition points; this is followed by cigarette butts at 29.8%.
- **Storm drains** - Located primarily in gutters and designed to drain excess rain from paved streets, parking lots, etc. storm drains tend to attract cigarette butts, confection, and other litter.
- **Loading docks** - Areas behind retail and wholesale business where products are loaded/unloaded from trucks and trailers can become littered with cigarette butts, confection, and paper.
- **Recreational Areas** - Parks, beaches, courts, and open areas where people congregate for leisure activities create opportunities for littering.
- **Construction sites** - Active residential or commercial construction are a trap for cigarette butts, paper, and plastic.
- **Retail** – High-traffic locations such as shopping centers, strip malls, and convenience stores can generate litter, such as packaging, cigarette butts and confection on the ground.

Litter Dynamics

Litter is often carried from its points of origin by water, wind, traffic and animals until it becomes trapped by fences, walls, curbs or other barriers. Litter accumulates in gutters, outside doorways, and at bus shelters. Much of litter ends up in waterways entering through storm drains and other sources.

Littering Behavior

The individual is the most important factor in whether littering will occur. 85% of littering behavior is due to individual attitudes (e.g., lack of awareness, lack of concern, or lack of motivation); 15% is affected by the environment (e.g., lack of receptacles, distance to receptacles, or the amount of litter, etc.). For cigarette litter, it is 62% individual attitudes and 38% environment. This creates a strong motivation to establish prevention strategies that specifically target motivating individuals to properly dispose of waste.

Litter and the Individual

People are the primary sources of litter, and younger individuals (under 30) more so than older. In fact, age, and not gender, is a significant predictor of littering behavior. A second variable when it comes to individuals and littering is a personal obligation to not litter. Individuals who hold the belief that littering is wrong, and consequently feel a personal obligation not to litter, are less likely to do so.

Litter and the Environment

Research underscores the relationship between community appearance and littering behavior. One of the strongest contributors to littering is the prevalence of existing litter. Litter begets litter. Individuals are much more likely to litter into littered environments. The presence of litter in an area conveys a norm that littering is acceptable. Conversely, those living in communities where there is less visible litter are less likely to report littering in beautified environments. As a result, posting litter prevention messages or signs in already littered environments is likely to exacerbate the littering problem rather than fix it. These research findings support the need for ongoing cleanup and beautification efforts. Where plants and infrastructure are attractive, people are less likely to report littering behavior. Proximity to trash receptacles also affects whether an individual chooses to litter.

Litter and Social Norms

A norm is a pattern of behavior that is accepted, expected, and reinforced when others behave in the same manner. A norm is "the way things are done around here," and becomes an expected code of behavior. A normative system is the state created by the general acceptance of norms. Within this system is a variety of attitudes. For example, many people feel it is acceptable to litter

- Where someone cleans up,
- Where there is no sense of ownership, or
- Where litter has already begun to accumulate.

“Gatekeepers” in a community, or those who want to maintain the status quo, believe

- “It’s not my responsibility.”
- “I’m only one person, what I do won’t matter.”
- “I’ve always done it this way.”

As norms are learned behaviors, they can be changed. Understanding what norms exist better equips a community to develop ways to change the attitudes and behaviors. Create positive norms, for example:

- Put trash in garbage receptacles
- Recycle and reuse when possible
- Cover debris for transportation
- Provide and maintain trash receptacles
- Identify and eliminate litter sources

PRESSURE POINTS FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Traditional approaches to litter, most particularly cleanup projects, work only to remove the litter and do little to prevent its recurrence. While research shows that cleaner communities affect littering behavior, they are a smaller part of the equation. KAB attempts to deal with the root cause of the problem—littering behavior. While cleanups may be a part of your local action plan for a cleaner community, changing the littering behaviors that generate the litter is the long-term solution.

Changing attitudes and influencing behavior are brought about most effectively using a combination of methods. Use the “pressure points” below to help develop programs that will change individual behavior and your community.

Education: Public attitudes and behavior about community improvement including litter prevention, beautification and community greening, and waste reduction and recycling are affected by education. Education and awareness are bedrock tools of behavior change. Think broadly in your approach. Education includes more than school programs. It may also include after-school and other youth programs, training seminars, workshops, public relations programs, and media campaigns. Consider tie-ins with public education conducted through civic clubs, Chambers of Commerce, businesses, and government agencies.

Ordinances: Every community has codes, laws or ordinances that affect quality of life. Changing public policy through codes, laws or ordinances is one way to change behaviors around quality-of-life and environmental issues. With the assistance of appropriate officials and government agency heads, research and review the applicable ordinances/codes to understand what exists and to determine where amendments and new ordinances may be need to establish community standards.

Enforcement: Consistent and effective enforcement of existing codes, laws, and ordinances will help change behavior and reinforce the commitment to a cleaner, greener community. Work closely with law enforcement. Officers and enforcement personnel must be informed and be supported by the community. Citizens must be educated so that they can comply with codes, ordinances, and laws. Peer pressure around a law can also be useful.

Making Tools and Resources Available Through Public-Private Partnerships: Tools and resources for changing behavior may include such tangible things as a litter pick up tool, sanitation collection vehicles, graffiti removal equipment, litter receptacles, recycling bins, or a pocket ashtray. It also includes tools that encourage individuals to make different long-term choices. These strategies are drawn from research and theory around *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing* (Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith). This approach blends knowledge from social marketing with behavior change tools.

Consider a combination of the following tools for programs that are most likely to change behavior:

- **Commitment:** Most behaviors you want to encourage, such as not littering, are personal and invisible. Asking individuals to make a public and long-lasting commitment is one way to increase visibility and change behavior. Making a voluntary commitment also helps individuals perceive themselves as already taking some action and encourages further involvement.
- **Social Diffusion:** Social diffusion, a process by which a behavior is communicated through a social network, is a powerful way to change behavior. Identify the most respected individuals in the community to model the behavior you want to change and others will follow. Social diffusion works best with people we are most likely to look up to, interact with, and respect.
- **Prompts:** Prompts are visual or auditory aids that remind us to carry out an activity we might otherwise forget. A prompt helps to trigger memory. Use prompts close in space and time around where you want the behavior to be practiced. For example, point-of-sale prompts can increase purchase of recycled-content products or a sign upon entering a store prompting customers to remember their reusable bag can send shoppers back to their cars to retrieve them.
- **Norms:** Norms guide and have a powerful impact on how we behave. If we observe others not littering, we are more likely to act similarly. If we see all of our neighbors, taking recyclables to the curb communicates a community norm about the importance of recycling. Personal contacts are also likely to reinforce the expected and appropriate behavior.
- **Communication:** All programs that intend to change behavior long-term have a communications component. A strong litter prevention message is one that emphasizes a clean environment, beautification, and the general community norm against littering. Avoid messages that depict litter-strewn environments or images of individuals littering, as these tend to reinforce the norm that a littered environment is acceptable. For effective communications and messaging, consider:
 - Capture attention with a vivid message/image. Show behavior and an environment that you want to reinforce rather than the opposite. For example, model a clean environment and not a littered one.
 - Make your message easy to remember.
 - Use a credible source to deliver the message/communication.
 - Connect messages to specific benefits that result from behavior change.
 - Keep the message positive. Fear-based appeals around the environment tend to make audiences feel they have little control or impact on the issue.
 - Emphasize personal contact. The best medium to deliver communication is face-to-face.
 - This is followed by TV, internet, radio, and newspaper outreach.
- **Incentives:** Using some type of incentive, such as a reward, coupon, or public recognition, can help to motivate a particular action. Incentives work best when they reward individuals for positive behavior.

- **Technology and Structural Changes:** New technology or equipment can make a desired behavior more convenient. For example, structural changes in ash receptacles, from combined ash and trash to ash-only, has improved appropriate disposal of cigarette butts. Changes in recycling collection containers, such as those shaped to collect only certain recyclables, like containers or paper, help guide individuals toward proper disposal. They also create less contamination of recyclables. New camera and GPS technologies are helping law enforcement reduce graffiti vandalism.

KAB AND COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE

Keep America Beautiful’s growing and evolving network of affiliates forms a direct connection with communities to carry out our mission from coast to coast. Our national organization serves to support and nurture affiliates in their mission to improve communities and the lives of residents. Our affiliates promote individual responsibility and engage volunteers, together with local civic organizations, government officials, corporations and individuals, to address local quality of life issues. KAB continues to build on its legacy of education and collective action to sustain a better quality of life for all.

By addressing the physical aspects of the community, such as neighborhoods, playgrounds, business areas, malls and town centers, landfills and recycling facilities, medians, plazas, streets and highways and our natural spaces (public lands, waterways and shorelines, trails, greenways and state and national parks), Keep America Beautiful positively affects the built environment.

Locally, Keep America Beautiful’s affiliate efforts are a cornerstone for community revitalization, conservation, and economic development. Our network of local, statewide, and international affiliates and participating organizations works with businesses, schools, neighborhood groups and local governments to tackle tough issues—graffiti, illegal dumping, highway litter, water pollution, unkempt vacant lots, urban runoff into waterways and lack of green spaces. We are credible, valued leaders in our communities who deliver local tools to create positive change in key areas affecting quality of life.

Keep America Beautiful and the network of affiliates inspire positive action, every day. Through our strong programs, partnerships and network, Keep America Beautiful finds practical ways for everyone to get involved. Improving community environments is the KAB mission. Collective action and partnership between sectors is going to be the key to continuing the legacy that will truly *keep America beautiful* for generations to come.

