



# 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.



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# 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 within 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 on a daily basis when you return home from work, a once a week 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 KIB needs to focus, as well as improve the program overall.

## TOOLS AND SUPPLIES

Each block captain receives a cleanup kit that includes his or her choice of **four of the following items**: a broom, shovel, bags, gloves, scoop, bucket, or litter-grabber. We provide door hangers for after you receive your starter kit, we will provide you with gloves and trash bags on an annual basis. We encourage captains to pick up their supplies during our annual Supplies Distribution event, which takes place at the end of March. If you are unable to attend the event, you can arrange to pick up your cleanup kit at the KIB office (1029 Fletcher Ave).

## BLOCK 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 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!



College Ave. starting at 37<sup>th</sup> St. and ending at 38<sup>th</sup> Street. The block captain is also responsible for cleaning up the east side of the west alley, and the west side of the east alley, because these areas pertain to the houses and businesses on the block of 3700 N. College.

## 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 KIB volunteer opportunities!

Along with the above, your block will be scored at least two times between May and October by KIB. 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 Mayor's Action Center, including: junk; trash and debris; graffiti; abandoned and inoperable vehicles; high weeds and grass; etc. You will be notified of such conditions in your monthly score letter. Report these conditions to the Mayor's Action Center at 317-327-4622 or on the *RequestIndy* portal which you can access through the City of Indianapolis website at [www.indy.gov](http://www.indy.gov).

# DISTRIBUTIONS



## NATIVE PLANT DISTRIBUTION

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!

Every eligible captain will receive a variety of native plants and flowers, as well as annual flowers if available. We try to order enough for every eligible volunteer, but we cannot guarantee availability.

## TREE DISTRIBUTION

In October KIB is fortunate to be able to offer a tree distribution to Adopt-A-Block captains. Each block captain may request up to 2 trees. They can choose which type from a list of species we will provide each year. These trees will come to you 5-15 feet tall, and you water them with 15 gallons of water a week, May-October, for the first two years.

Through Keep Indianapolis Beautiful's Community Forestry Program, your block or neighborhood can get 20+ trees to plant along your residential streets or in neighborhood common areas. Please check out [www.kibi.org/community-forestry](http://www.kibi.org/community-forestry) for more info.

# Little BIG (Block Improvement Grants) Awards

*This Adopt-A-Block Micro-Grant program is a way for you and your fellow captains to get together and make your neighborhood better! Keep Indianapolis Beautiful will be funding at least three Adopt-A-Block community projects each year, up to \$500 each.*

## ABOUT

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 from KIB. 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 KIB Staff and the Adopt-A-Block Steering Committee at monthly Steering Committee Meetings, applications will be accepted from January 1st until the funding pool has been depleted. Your committee must consist of at least three current Adopt-A-Block Captains. Awards will be reimbursed in the form of a check from KIB when the budgeted work has been completed.

KIB 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!

## PAST PROJECTS

### 2015 PROJECTS

In 2015, the first year of the program, three projects were funded for pilot projects:

- Englewood – T-shirt design as fundraiser for community greenspace care
- Irvington – Invasive removal and gateway planting
- Broad Ripple – Ezra's Café Mural

### 2016 PROJECTS

Based on the success of the 2015 grants we were able to increase our budget for funding of six projects:

- Fall Creek Place – Park Beautification
- Fletcher Place – Streetscaping/Litter Prevention
- Rivoli Park – Crime Prevention/Fire Safety Block Party
- IPS Eleanor Skillen/Bean Creek – Community Picnic/Greenspace Celebration
- Watson McCord – Block Party/Park Cleanup
- Woodruff Place – Community Pocket Park Planting

# EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## VOLUNTEER & DONOR APPRECIATION DINNER

Every year we host the Volunteers and Donors Appreciation Dinner to recognize and appreciate all KIB donors and volunteers, including Block Captains, that served the previous year. At this dinner, you will hear about past successes, upcoming projects and an array of awards that will encourage and motivate you to get ready for spring cleaning! We provide you with a full-catered dinner and an opportunity to socialize with others citywide that are passionate about block beautification.

KIB will honor special attendees with awards for various accomplishments across all KIB programs. Thank you for all that you do to keep Indy beautiful! We hope to see you there!



## KIB EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

From Lunch & Learns to GreenKids clubs and everything in between, the KIB Department of Education provides opportunities for educational development for all. More info coming soon at [www.kibi.org](http://www.kibi.org)

# GREAT INDY CLEANUP



KIB's Great Indy Cleanup (GIC) is an anti-litter, community empowering program in partnership with the City of Indianapolis. 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 KIB PROVIDES

- **Cleanup supplies:** Trash bags and gloves (additional supplies available in April!)
- **A dumpster:** In partnership with the City of Indianapolis and through a generous donation from South Side Landfill, KIB is able to provide dumpsters for your community cleanup. During April and October, city trash trucks are also available.
- **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? KIB's logo? [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 through Keep Indianapolis Beautiful. Share your cleanup photos on our Facebook page!

The Great Indy Cleanup runs every weekend, from April through the end of October. Dumpsters will be delivered up to two days before your scheduled event, and will be picked up within two days following the event. Resources are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Cleanup request forms are available on the web at <http://www.kibi.org/>, or contact Gerardo Ruiz Tovar at [gruiztovar@kibi.org](mailto:gruiztovar@kibi.org) or 317-264-7555 x130

This program is not intended for personal use (garage/basement cleanouts, etc.), but is based on generous donations from the City of Indianapolis' Department of Public Works and South Side Landfill to assist volunteers dedicated to making a difference in their community. Please help us to ensure these donated resources are put to the highest community good!

The Great Indy Cleanup would not be possible without the support of our sponsors. A huge thank-you to **South Side Landfill**, whose generous donations of trash disposal services makes this program possible.



# 42 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 brunches. One Saturday a month, have a different person host the 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 before you do your actual cleanup.
4. Go door to door and pass out the Adopt-A-Block door hangers from KIB. 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 disabled 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 whose 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 a KIB 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 involve the child, and explain to them 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 disabled 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 a KIB 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 services 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. Gang up on problem properties. Have a group of neighbors watch nuisance properties and call 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 KIB grants every year through the Spring Flower Distribution.
41. Choose a new neighbor every year to be the recipient of a “garden.” – All of the other neighbors get together to design and plant up the yard using the flowers that KIB gives through the Spring Flower Distribution. The rest of the flowers are divided amongst the rest of the neighbors to be put in their own yards.
42. Organize a tree planting with KIB.



# OTHER KIB PROGRAMS THAT CAN HELP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD...

Each year, KIB supports an average of 500 community improvement projects with more than 30,000 volunteers. For the past three decades, we've partnered with neighborhoods, the public sector, and Indianapolis community groups and businesses to achieve our vision for a beautiful city.

Visit our website at [www.kibi.org](http://www.kibi.org) to learn about the other amazing KIB programs that can help your neighborhood plant trees, build pocket parks, and improve community gateways, schools and more!

## IPL PROJECT GREENSPACE

We partner with neighborhood-based organizations to help eliminate blight and to revitalize public spaces.

Every year we choose up six community spaces in neighborhoods throughout Marion County. Projects range from natural spaces, community gathering spaces and gateways. All of the projects are community led and are rooted in placemaking to create a more vibrant community.

Each Greenspace is a yearlong build and design process followed by two years of stewardship assistance for each space created. We, with the our partners, not only to build the space but make sure that they have the tools to take care of the space and can continue to keep it vibrant.



BAUMAN COMMUNITY PARK, 2013 PROJECT



DEVINGTON BUS SHELTER, 2013 PROJECT

## YOUTH TREE TEAM (YTT)

The YTT is a seven-week summer job for high school students who are interested in improving their community through tree care. YTT seeks to promote professionalism, respect, personal and environmental responsibility, and teamwork in today's high school

students. We work outdoors to water, mulch, prune, stake, and plant trees through the Community Forestry program. Other duties include consistent attendance and punctuality, weeding, litter clean-up, working harmoniously with team members, follow crew leader directions, participating fully in enrichment activities, filling out work logs and other duties as assigned. Hard work helps us connect Indy youth to the environment and each other, fostering a commitment to service and cultivating lasting friendships and a connection to their community.

## **COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAMS**

KIB's goal is to plant 100,000 large, one-inch caliper trees in strategic locations throughout Marion County. With your help, we can grow our city's tree canopy and make Indy a better place to live, work, and play.

Our Community Forestry program gives neighbors the opportunity to plant, collaboratively raise support and care for trees in the neighborhood. Trees create a beautiful, healthy, and safe environment for Indy residents. They improve the natural environment with their aesthetics, and they help produce clean air and water. Research also shows that trees help to reduce crime and foster more sociable neighborhoods. In inner-city neighborhoods, the greener the residence, the lower the crime rate.

## **KIB GREENKIDS**

Helping Kids Create Vibrant Places Where They, Their Neighbors, and the Natural World Thrive! GreenKids works with schools in Marion County to create an outdoor learning space and lead a club of students in learning about and caring for the natural world.

## **TRASH BOXES & RECYCLING BINS**

KIB has trash boxes and recycling bins for your next event!

Our trash box program is sponsored by WTHR Channel 13. Trash boxes are \$4.00 each and sold as a fundraiser to benefit KIB and payment is expected at time of pick-up. We accept checks, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and cash. If paying with cash, please have exact change as we do not have cash on hand.

KIB is able to provide portable recycling bins (called ClearStreams) for your event as well. Bins can be rented for \$4.00 apiece. We do require to store credit card information securely on file for the duration of each loan, but there will be NO CHARGE to the credit card as long as the bins are returned clean, undamaged and in a timely manner.



## OTHER

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## RESOURCES

### Marion County Citizens' Transfer Station

Located at 2700 S. Belmont Ave., the transfer station is open every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cost per car-load of household trash is \$2.00; \$5.00 for a pickup truck load. All items must be within one vehicle. Trailer loads are not accepted. Construction materials are not accepted.

### Station

Ave., the transfer station is open every Saturday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cost per car-load of household trash is \$2.00; \$5.00 for a pickup truck load. All items must be within one vehicle. Trailer loads are not accepted. Construction materials are not accepted.

- **Directions from I-70:** Take Harding Street exit from I-70 and head south. At the intersection of Harding and Raymond, head west on Raymond. The entrance will be on your left. (The Transfer Station is closed on those Saturdays falling closest to Christmas Day and New Year's Day.)

### ToxDrop & eCycle Programs

The City of Indianapolis offers four locations in Marion County where residents can drop off household hazardous waste and electronics for recycling at no charge. For location information and a listing of materials accepted call (317) 327-4869.

### Southside Landfill

Mulch and compost from curbside pick-up of mulched leaves, and loads of brush brought to the landfill. For more information call (317) 270-5500.

### Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership

3550 N. Washington Blvd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46205  
(317) 610-4663

### Tiffany Lawn and Garden Supply Co.

4931 Robison Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46268  
(317) 228-4900

### Indiana Mulch and Stone LLC

1451 S West Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46225  
(317) 228 4900

### GreenCycle (greencycleindy.com)

103 W Troy Ave  
Indianapolis, IN 46225  
(317) 780-8175

### Mayor's Neighborhood Advocates

Go to [indy.gov](http://indy.gov) > Neighborhood Services > Mayor's Neighborhood Advocates.

[www.indy.gov/egov/mayor/getintouch/neighborhood\\_services/ta/Pages/home.aspx](http://www.indy.gov/egov/mayor/getintouch/neighborhood_services/ta/Pages/home.aspx)

- This website will show a map of Indianapolis and its districts that are covered by certain Advocates. Advocates will be listed below the map along with their contact information. You can also enter your address to determine who is listed as your Mayor's Neighborhood Advocate.

### Marion County Health and Hospital Corporation: Tool Loan Program

Daron Thompson  
3838 N Rural St, Indianapolis, IN 46205  
(317) 339-5112

# CONTACT US WITH ANY QUESTIONS!

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