

### Dear friends,

If 2020 could be summed up with the word "resourcefulness," the word for 2021 would be "resilience." As the second year of the pandemic wore on, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful stayed true to our mission to create diverse public places where people and nature can thrive. We are proud of all we were able to accomplish.

We started the year with the creation of a new four-year strategic plan, focused on improving environmental equity. We researched and analyzed different data sets to develop a plan to focus our efforts in the parts of the city that both need – and want – more green infrastructure.



Parts of the city that need more green infrastructure may be places that were historically redlined and currently lack green space or tree canopy. Some neighborhoods have more litter and heavy trash than others. Some communities are more socially vulnerable and do not have the time or resources to get more engaged. Our strategic plan aims to engage communities, to create more opportunities for community members to guide our work to be appropriate for the neighborhood, and to provide resources to make every community cleaner and greener.

We also continue to work diligently to become a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization. We amended our board bylaws to create a standalone Diversity Committee. We engaged a consultant to work with the staff and board to develop our collective cultural intelligence. We still have a LOT of work to do, but are committed to this long journey to be a thoughtful and caring partner with all the communities we serve.

With your help, and despite ongoing challenges in the city and throughout the world, we were still able to create new greenspaces, to plant over 3,000 new trees, and to pick up over 500,000 pounds of litter. We all have a role to play to make Indy a better place for ourselves, for each other, and for the future.

Come join us in this most satisfying, uplifting, and joyous work. Together let's create a city where people and nature can thrive.

Jeremy Kranowitz





Friends of Keep Indianapolis Beautiful,

It's probably fair to say that we continue to navigate through interesting and challenging times, where achieving goals and measuring success can sometimes feel like aiming at a moving target. Despite these challenges, I have been consistently impressed (and touched) by the dedication, resilience, and commitment from the community, our partners, and KIB staff to advance our values and mission-driven work. There is clearly renewed interest in volunteering, and I am in awe of your community spirit and grateful for the support KIB receives.



An important area of focus in our 2021-2024 strategic plan includes improving equitable access to environmental benefits to help people thrive in nature. I am particularly proud of KIB's ability to evolve and utilize available technology to target our projects where we can derive the most impact by considering data related to litter, tree canopy cover, the Thrive Indianapolis Plan Social Vulnerability Index, and community engagement. Applying data to select project locations not only allows us to apply our resources to provide the most impact, but also enables us to measure the outcome of our investments over time.

As it is in our nature to evaluate current practices and find ways to improve our approach to projects for the betterment of our community, we also continue to look inward to provide an equitable, inclusive, and diverse workplace where our team and our partners can thrive as we partner to create vibrant public places where people and nature will thrive in Indianapolis. I think 2021 has measured up to be a successful year for KIB, and I believe the outlook for 2022 looks bright (and green). Thank you for all you do, and I will see you out and about in the neighborhood.

Shelby Swango Chair, KIB Board of Directors Senior Vice President, WSP USA

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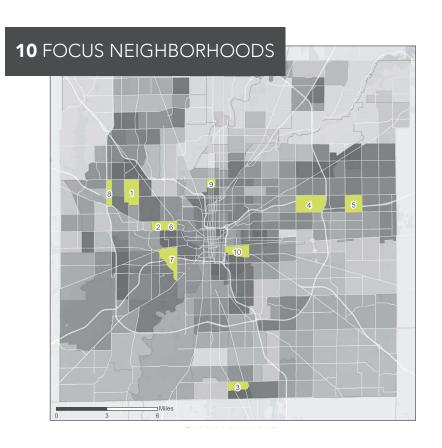


### STRATEGIC DIRECTION

In 2021, KIB embarked on its new four-year Strategic Plan. Some elements were inspired by nationwide conversations on racial equity, as well as our newly formed Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Charter. KIB staff and board identified environmental equity as a primary driver for the plan. We laid out three strategic goals for 2021–2024:

- 1. Equitably Improve Access to Environmental Benefits so People Can Thrive in Nature: Improve interaction with natural features in socially vulnerable neighborhoods, strengthen biodiversity to help nature thrive throughout the city, and reduce littering behavior to improve neighborhood cleanliness and health.
- 2. Broaden Neighborhood Representation and Awareness to Address Community-Driven Needs: Expand opportunities for input from neighborhoods to influence how and where KIB allocates its resources to improve environmental equity, increase opportunities for neighborhood participation in KIB programs, and broaden knowledge of KIB programming among neighborhood residents and partners.
- 3. Improve Long-Term Financial Sustainability to Allow for Equitable Allocation of KIB Resources: Diversify sources of annual revenue to allow for more resources to be allocated in neighborhoods that need and want them most, grow financial reserves to ensure stability during economic downturns, and secure funds for social programs to help people thrive.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION



Using our Key Neighborhood Identification Tool (KNIT), KIB has identified areas in the city where our resources can have the greatest positive impact.

This map highlights 10 Focus Areas where social vulnerability is highest, tree canopy coverage is lowest, litter is highest, and KIB's past involvement and use of resources has been lowest.

### NOTABLE COLLABORATIONS

### CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

KIB receives funding from the City of Indianapolis, directed through the Department of Public Works (DPW), to assist with creating and maintaining green infrastructure. 2021 marks the second year of a three-year contract with the City of Indianapolis. Our plan has ties to multiple partner agencies' plans to increase quality of life: The Thrive Indianapolis Sustainability Plan, the White River Vision plan, and the Project Indy/JobReady Indy initiative for youth workforce development.

In partnership with the Office of Sustainability, KIB continued year two of a three-year effort to understand littering and illegal dumping in Indy and to develop a campaign to change those behaviors.

Awareness-generating messaging was paired with research-based behavioral science interventions that included mailers about heavy trash disposal and signage at bus stops that encouraged riders to use the provided trash cans. We learned that mailers about heavy trash had an immediate, large impact on proper disposal.





### **NOTABLE COLLABORATIONS**

### **CLEAR CHOICES, CLEAN WATER**

An exciting partnership with the White River Alliance supports the Clear Choices, Clean Water Program. Clear Choices, Clean Water is a national award-winning program that seeks to increase awareness about the daily choices we can make as individuals to improve water quality and conserve water supplies. The program has specific pledges individuals can take to help their local environment including pledging to stop and prevent litter, grow soil health, plant natives, protect pollinators, conserve water, and more! KIB supports these pledges and promotes related efforts.

### PARTNERS FOR THE WHITE RIVER

In July 2017, the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust first announced a \$4.8 million commitment to a multi-year initiative to protect and restore the White River. In Phase I, KIB's role involved over 80 acres of habitat restoration along the White River and its tributaries as well as the creation of two high-value native public landscapes at Fall Creek and 30th Street and in Christian Park. KIB continues the work via Phase II of the grant for 2021–22. This phase supports five Urban Naturalists along with our work focusing on Riverside Park and Ravenswood Overlook Park.

### **RECONNECTING TO OUR WATERWAYS (ROW)**

KIB was a founding partner of Reconnecting to Our Waterways (ROW) in 2012 and continues to be an active participant. ROW is a collective impact initiative with more than 100 local partners that work to change the quality of life and ecology along Indianapolis waterways — and in surrounding neighborhoods. In addition to serving on the ROW Steering Committee, KIB staff chair the Ecology committee, Pogue's Run Waterway committee, and Sustainability Task Force.

## PROGRAM REPORT: BEAUTIFICATION AND ANTI-LITTER

### **GREAT INDY CLEANUP**

Results: 255.14 tons of litter removed from streets, alleys, and parks.

Although the pandemic was still in full swing in early 2021, the number of cleanups this year nearly quadrupled from 2020's numbers, with a total of 313 compared to 63 in 2020. An estimated 3,713 individuals volunteered through Cleanups in 2021, picking up an increased amount of 255.14 tons. of litter.

We saw incredible work from volunteers and the City's Solid Waste Team this year. Beginning in April we tried a new strategy of concentrating our resources to specific sides (East or West) of the city, which allowed DPW staff to travel less for cleanups, conserving resources. We also chose this year's Focus Neighborhoods to align with the 2021 GreenSpace Awardees in the hope that this collaboration would increase the number of local residents at the Focus Cleanup, raise neighborhood awareness of the GreenSpace in their community, and create a time and space for the community to gather with a common purpose!

### ADOPT-A-BLOCK

Results: 983 people dedicated to keeping their streets free of litter and debris.

At the end of 2021 our Block Captains were covering 230.2 miles of Indianapolis' blocks! Each month we sent out a newsletter of upcoming events to each Block Captain and continue to get supplies in the hands of community members through weekly supplies pickup days.



## PROGRAM REPORT: GREENING PROGRAMS

### **AES INDIANA PROJECT GREENSPACE**

Results: Fifty-Seven engaged spaces bringing communities together and support nature — including a new one created in 2021.

**Far Eastside Orchard (Far Eastside):** The Community Alliance of the Far Eastside (CAFE) has been serving the far eastside community for over 30 years and through this project they hope to improve the green infrastructure needed to enhance the quality of life in their neighborhood. CAFE rallied community stakeholders to realize a vision to transform unused greenspace on their property into a space to be used for residential access to nature, community events, and youth programming. Some of the elements completed in 2021 include; 937 linear feet of 4 foot wide concrete sidewalks, 60 linear feet of 4 foot wide crushed gravel pathway, 4 benches along pathway, and nature play tunnel.

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## PROGRAM REPORT: GREENING PROGRAMS

### **HABITAT RESTORATION**

Results: Replaced invasive species with native plants that support local wildlife and ecosystems.

Much of the riparian area in Indianapolis (land along the banks of a river or stream) is overcome with invasive plants. Through KIB's habitat restoration efforts, harmful plants are removed and eventually replaced with native species.

KIB's four-member team of college-age Urban Naturalists managed invasive species at eight sites, sowing a diverse native grass seed mix to restore the understory. Additionally, they continued to steward two high-value native landscapes at Christian Park and Fall Creek and 30th Park.

### **COMMUNITY FORESTRY**

Results: Planted 3,441 trees that help improve our air and water quality.

KIB was able to complete every tree planting slated for the 2021 calendar year, planting thousands of new trees—most of them native shade trees—along streets, in parks, at schools, in combined sewer overflow basins, and on private property.

# PROGRAM REPORT: YOUTH PROGRAMS

### **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Results: Indy residents learned about the importance and health of our environment.

Created in May 2021, the Education Hub wepage has become one of the most used resources KIB offers online. We had a 120% increase in viewership to the site in 2021.

### YOUTH TREE TEAM (HIGH SCHOOL & EARLY COLLEGE)

Results: Thirty-two youth gained experience planting and maintaining trees and developing jobready skills.

The three-season youth employment program not only centers on tree care, but also provides personal and professional development and enrichment opportunities. The youth focused on mulching trees that had been planted over the past three years and helped KIB meet its planting goals. Enrichment activities focused on the seven dimensions of wellness: Mental, physical, social, financial, spiritual, environmental, and vocational.





# PROGRAM REPORT: YOUTH PROGRAMS

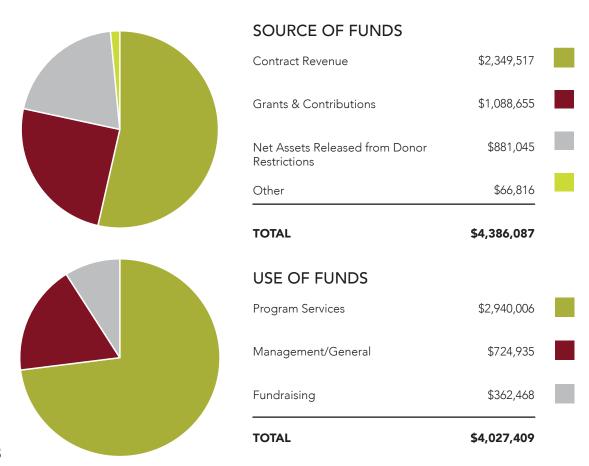
### **URBAN NATURALISTS (UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE)**

Results: Four-member team of young adults helped restore Indy habitat.

KIB employs college students interested in environmental careers. In 2021 KIB's four-member team managed 0.6 acres of invasive plant species at 8 sites, took care of native landscapes at Christian Park and at Fall Creek and 30th Park, and picked up 10,261 pounds of litter as well as taking on additional responsibilities to assist and collaborate with the Youth Tree Team.

"I think one of the most important things that I learned is proper plant ID. Having a person that is knowledgeable on this topic and will quiz you when you are out on the field, really improved my skills. Additionally, one of the most important skills that I learned was how to work in a team. Everyone brought special skills to the team, so finding those skills and using them to improve our work was an extremely important skill that I gained." — 2021 Urban Naturalist

### YEAR IN REVIEW: FINANCIALS



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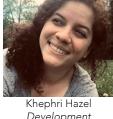
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### WHO WE ARE

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc. is a nonprofit organization with a mission to engage diverse communities to create vibrant public places, helping people and nature thrive. Annually, KIB works with thousands of volunteers on hundreds of community projects across Marion County.

### WHAT WE DO

We're the ones who smile when planting trees in the rain, who laugh with friends as we pick trash off our neighborhood streets, and who care very deeply about the health, happiness, and greenness of our city. We see a beautiful place to call home—one that is loved and cared for by the community and is ecologically rich with plants, trees, and pollinators.

How do we do it? We plant trees, create green spaces, engage students in nature, restore urban habitat, and pick up litter with the help of volunteers and donors like you.

kibi.org





