



Strategic Plan

2015 – 2017

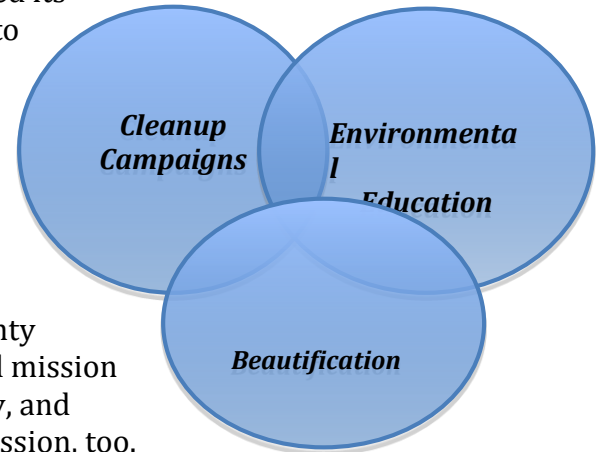
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Background

In 1997, the Rockland County Beautification Commission formed a non-profit corporation, Keep Rockland Beautiful (KRB), a certified affiliate of the national Keep America Beautiful (KAB) network. Like its parent organization, KRB manages the annual Great American Cleanup campaign each Spring, and serves as an environmental issues resource for its citizens.

Over the past 17 years, Keep Rockland Beautiful has evolved its community focus and scope from improving appearances to building a more clean, healthy, environmentally sound Rockland County. KRB's elementary and high school environmental education programs comprise as large an effort as its cleanup campaigns, and the two activities reinforce and mutually benefit each other.



Today, KRB programs are larger, more recognized and valued than at any other time in its history. Rockland County residents increasingly understand and embrace the shared mission of making our streets, streams and parks clean and healthy, and assuring the next generation of neighbors will own that mission, too.

Yet KRB is facing challenges to its budding growth. County funding has dwindled in recent years, and remains in serious jeopardy for the foreseeable future. Donations, sponsorships and other grants have helped offset this shortfall to some degree, and KRB continues operating on an extremely modest budget.

This three-year Strategic Plan provides KRB's roadmap to an increasingly diversified portfolio of support that will assure its mission of a clean, green, healthy Rockland County does not falter. In addition to guiding the KRB staff and Board of Directors, the Strategic Plan is a shared Plan for all of KRB's partners and stakeholders, with implications for its members, private partners, policy and lawmakers and other non-profit entities.

Our goal is more than growth for the sake of growth. We envision a Rockland County with clean water, safe litter-free parks and playgrounds, prosperity with environmentally sensitive solutions, and real community ownership of the world outdoors.

Programs

Cleanup campaigns

Great American Cleanup (April- May)

The Great American Cleanup, an annual campaign, involves over 3,500 volunteers who bag trash and litter from roads, parks and waterways. Individuals, families, neighbors, civic and scout groups and businesses all participate. We partner with towns, highway departments, the Solid

Waste Management Authority, the Rockland County Health Department and environmental organizations in planning and implementing this county-wide event. Over 350 cleanup events take place throughout April and May.

In 2013 and 2014, KRB has been working to support and facilitate Community Cleanup Events. These community-building events bring clean up teams to a central location to pick up supplies and site instructions, enjoy refreshments, meet their neighbors and share their stories. In 2014, there were 22 Community Cleanup Events throughout the county.

In 2012, KRB added an outreach component of the GAC to promote the School Bag-A-Thon initiative. Through this program, students and their families get out for the cleanup and earn dollars for their school through pledges, either per bag or unit of time. These Bag-A-Thon events are often coupled with a Community Cleanup Event.

KRB supplies cleanup volunteers with bags, litter grabbers (for loan or sale), donated supplies such as wipes, t-shirts and tote bags. Businesses and other supporters sponsor the t-shirts, totes, and promotional banners that are hung throughout the county, making the GAC one of our largest fundraising events.

Fall Waterways Cleanup (October-November)

The Fall Waterways Cleanup replicates and reinforces the GAC during the Fall, with a focus on the connection between polluted runoff and the quality of our streams, lakes, and underground aquifers. While there are fewer sites and community cleanups during the Fall, it serves as an effective repeat measure in keeping litter off the streets, which in turn deters travelers from trashing neighborhoods.

Great Shopping Cart Rescue (ongoing)

In 2013, the KRB Board initiated the Shopping Cart Rescue. Supported by a donated U-haul truck, a growing number of KRB volunteers have participate in the recurring Shopping Cart Rescue, identifying stray grocery carts and returning them to their rightful retail homes. Not only do these carts make neighborhoods appear unkempt and sloppy, they are also a costly asset to the stores that lose them when careless shoppers illegally take them off the premises. Carts that are too damaged to be used are given to a local recycling center.

Environmental Education

Rockland P.L.U.S. (Planning Land Use with Students)

Rockland P.L.U.S is a collaborative partnership of KRB, Columbia University's Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory, and the Rockland County Service Corps. PLUS is a one-day intensive program conducted each Spring that engages students from high schools throughout the county in planning for sustainable communities. The program begins with classroom visits by P.L.U.S. educators. Students explore the socio-economic and environmental issues associated with land use, they then develop their own plan for a local site.

The program culminates in a symposium that brings in professionals to act as mentors. Students share poster presentations on their site, then break out to do collaborative

planning with peers from other schools under mentor guidance. In addition to educating students about sustainable planning and heightening their awareness of environmental and related community issues, the project builds bridges across racial, ethnic and class divides by mixing students from different school districts together at the Symposium, and providing a structure for the students to share perspectives on community issues and needs.

In 2015, students will once again explore smart growth and transit-oriented development for their own communities, then plan collaboratively for a site along the Tappan Zee Bridge/1287 corridor in Rockland County.

Earth B.E.A.T.

This program for elementary and middle schools engages students in a day focused on learning about the environment and building sustainable communities. Through interactive activities, or Eco-Stations, students learn about local ecology, waste reduction and energy conservation and are provided with simple steps they can take to help care for the environment. There are over 20 Eco-Stations from which to choose.

Keep Rockland Beautiful trains teachers and parents as Eco-Station facilitators, supplies Eco-Station materials, and assists schools with event coordination. Schools choose the number of Eco-Stations activities that each student will visit. KRB can also help schools plan a lively morning Kick Off or afternoon Wrap Up assembly, which is often used to start off a green initiative such as recycling.

In 2015, KRB is offering an Earth B.E.A.T. Pro option where everything from facilitation to coordination is taken care of by the KRB Educator team.

Beautification

Artful Receptacles Trash Can Beautification Project

KRB has organized artists, both amateur and professional, to re-decorate the steel drums used for trash cans at bus shelters. About 300 cans have been completed to date. We hold an annual Artful Receptacles Exhibit in May at the Orangetown Highway Department's Open House, a chance for families to vote for their favorite can and climb on big trucks. The program receives in-kind support from the Clarkstown and Orangetown Highway departments.

Events

Annual Meeting (January)

Each January, KRB members convene for the organization's annual public meeting. New Board members formally begin their three-year terms, the Executive Director and Board provide their members with updates on the Strategic Plan, and feedback and input is invited from the community on how KRB can improve its program delivery. The Annual Meeting is typically an evening reception with presentations and light refreshments.

GAC Wrap-Up Party – Mini-Golf Family BBQ (May)

This festive Friday afternoon gathering brings community cleanup leaders and volunteers, sponsors and supporters together to wrap up and celebrate the end of the spring Great American Cleanup campaign. The event is also a fundraiser to support Keep Rockland Beautiful and its programs. The event is an outdoor picnic-style celebration, with games, prizes, mini golf, a BBQ meal and live music.

Annual Awards Gala

Every year, KRB hosts an Award Gala to recognize and honor individuals, businesses and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to keeping Rockland beautiful. Since 2011, the event has been held at the Rockland Country Club. It is an elegant affair that also helps us raise funds to support our programs.

Other Community Services

Litter Warning Letters

The “Dear Litterbug” warning letter service, in partnership with the Sheriff’s Dept. since November 2007, allows volunteers to report the license plates of litterers to KRB. The Sheriff’s Department then sends out a warning letter to the vehicle owner to let them know they have been spotted littering. They are encouraged to keep Rockland clean and advised that if spotted by a law enforcement officer, they could be subject to fines or community service.

Community Service

Court-ordered community service “volunteers” sometimes call KRB and we put them to work cleaning up parking lots, doing data entry and other tasks. We have also used them for litter and dumpster surveys in the past.

KRB also benefits from the volunteer efforts of students who are seeking community service hours for school and honor societies. They have done everything from filing to creating new and improved illustrated bingo cards for the Earth B.E.A.T. program.

MISSION STATEMENT

Keep Rockland Beautiful leads efforts to clean up, beautify and protect Rockland County's environment by implementing programs that educate and empower people to share in the care and stewardship of our communities.

VISION STATEMENT

For Rockland County, we envision a community...

...with clean roadways, parks and waterways

...with balance between human impact and our natural resources and ecosystems

...with active, meaningful involvement amongst citizens in beautifying and caring for their environment

...where it's hard to find litter

VALUES STATEMENT

Keep Rockland Beautiful staff, Board members and partners value...

...preserving the uniqueness and diversity of Rockland County's natural and built environment

...efforts that motivate community service, and lead to collaborative approaches

...personal investment and responsibility for our mission, with a deep compassion for stewardship of Rockland County's environment

...celebrating incremental progress toward our mission

...education that informs current generations and empowers future generations

...understanding that every person's activities can have an impact

...having fun while caring for our community

Goals, Objectives and Actions

KRB's three-year strategic plan sets qualitative goals, measurable objectives and specific actions needed to progress toward its vision. The plan is intended to be a living document, a map for members, partners and stakeholders to chart the progress of KRB, and an accountability and performance tool. As such, it will be updated each year at the annual KRB Board of Directors' retreat, or as needed.

The Plan is divided into six major areas:

1. Partners and members
2. Cleanup campaigns
3. Environmental education
4. Communications, marketing and outreach
5. Fundraising and development
6. Data collection and evaluation

Within each area, the Plan identifies goals that are immediate (no later than December 2014), interim (over the next 2 – 3 years), and long-term (over the next 3 – 5 years and beyond). The Plan also identifies specific objectives and action items needed to accomplish each goal.

The Plan recognizes the natural overlap across these six areas – for example, to achieve success in an environmental education program such as Earth BEAT, KRB must assure a strong outreach component, as well as a comprehensive evaluation that instructs how future years' programs are conducted. This overlap will be reflected throughout the objectives and action items detailed in each of the six areas.

Equally critical and integrated with KRB's Strategic Plan is a robust Administrative Plan that assures the KRB Board, KRB office, staff and resources are optimally positioned to support the mission. The Administrative Plan, attached under Appendix A, articulates the existing structure and responsibilities of the Board and Office. The Administrative Plan also describes the vast talents the Executive Director and her team possess, as well as the necessary way forward to assure they can meet the goals set by the Strategic Plan.

1. *Partners and Members*

Goal 1a. Define, expand, and diversify benefits of individual, family and corporate membership (*Immediate*)

Objective 1a.1: Develop solicitation and disseminate to current members to identify colleagues, friends, and family that should be targeted for joining KRB

Objective 1a.2: Build and define concrete list of member benefits

ACTIONS: To meet these immediate objectives, the Membership Committee is developing and implementing a new member giveaway, and a schedule of members-only

events. The greatly improved, streamlined and more “visual” electronic newsletter that began circulating in 2014 continues to be distributed twice monthly via email, linking KRB’s database to Rockland County environmental news, cleanup events, education activities and opportunities to volunteer for beautification and other projects.

Objective: Review the current brochure with attached membership application for revision, including how activities are prioritized/presented (immediate – by January 2015).

Goal 1b. Broaden and formally define organizational partners and stakeholders (*Immediate and Ongoing*)

Objective 1b.1: Coordinate briefings with each of the five Towns’ elected officials to share Strategic Plan, and explore ways to enlist support and involvement

Objective 1b.2: Coordinate briefings with law enforcement leadership via the Rockland County Traffic Safety Board

Objective 1b.3: Identify key leader contacts and coordinate briefings with key potential local government, education, faith-based and non-profit organizations.

ACTIONS: The Executive Director, Development Director and members of the Board are continually reaching out to partners in local and county government. Prior to January 2015, the Board will help the Executive Director strategize a more formal approach to assuring active involvement from all key public stakeholders, both to strengthen the interdependent partnership and to support related community service.

2. *Cleanup Campaigns*

Goal 2a. Expand the number and type of cleanup campaigns (*Interim Goal – target Jan 2016*)

Objective 2a.1: institute new theme-focused cleanups

ACTIONS: Continue building the “shopping cart rescue,” where stray carts are returned to their rightful retail stores, and expand upon the Fall Waterways cleanup. Long-term theme cleanups may include a concrete and asphalt recycle pickup and park cleanups.

Objective 2a.2: tie beautification projects to community cleanups, especially in communities where they have not previously existed.

ACTIONS: Conduct outreach to local business and public works partners to identify sites, and firms to construct and maintain beautification projects.

Objective 2a.3: Increase countywide percentage of population participating in the Great American Cleanup from approximately 3,000 (1% of population) to approximately 4,500 (1.5% of population) – *Objective met in Spring 2014!*

Goal 2b. Strengthen recycling efforts across Rockland County (*Interim Goal – Target Dec 2016*)

Objective 2b.1: identify public spaces where recycling is not visibly available, and work with respective authority to ‘fill in the gaps’ (e.g., parks, ball fields, schools)

Objective 2b.2: strengthen recycling effort within cleanup campaigns, such as the Great American Cleanup in the Spring, and Waterways Cleanup in the Fall

ACTIONS: In 2015, educate and engage community cleanup leaders on potential partners who can assist in pickup up bulk recycling. In addition, explore data collection options with Rockland County Solid Waste Management Authority to track trends of recyclables brought to facility during campaigns.

Goal 2c. Grow the total number, quality, and autonomous management of community cleanups in support of the Great American Cleanup (GAC) (*Long-Term Goal*)

Objective 2c.1: set annual aggregate community cleanup goals to grow total number and breadth, and analyze neighborhoods that are both highly visible to multi-modal traffic (cars, pedestrians, public transport) and visibly and consistently littered.

Objective 2c.2: Develop and implement standard minimum guidelines to help enhance quality of community cleanup events

Objective 2c.3: Recruit and support community cleanup leaders in their planning, outreach and partnership efforts (as measured in number of volunteers, number of highly engaged/supportive partners and sponsors, quality of media coverage)

Objective 2c.4: Assure deep-rooted community cleanup events, and increase the focus in traditionally underserved areas

Objective 2c.5: Integrate membership and donation spokesperson and a Board member into every cleanup, assuring volunteers become members onsite

3. *Environmental Education*

Goal 3a. Incorporate Earth BEAT into elementary and middle school curriculum (*Interim*)

Objective 3a.1: identify thematic alignments between Earth BEAT and the common core curriculum, and forecast and address common hurdles/ barriers, such as budget cuts, standardized testing

ACTIONS: In 2015, develop a plan to demonstrate to Rockland's 86 principals/vice principals Earth BEAT's experiential learning benefit, targeting resource centers and private schools, as well. Educate school administrators on the service learning nature of Earth BEAT, building awareness of it as a source of local history, social studies and earth science.

Goal 3b. Assure participation from each of the County's high schools in the Rockland Planning Land Use with Students (PLUS) Symposium (*Long-Term*)

Objective 3b.1: strategize ways to grow participation in current model of PLUS, including seeking additional funding from partners to support schools that cannot afford to participate (e.g., Spring Valley High School)

Objective 3b.2: strategize ways to make PLUS participation more meaningful to participant schools and students

ACTIONS: In 2015 and beyond, identify thematic alignments between Rockland PLUS and the high school curriculum; develop more online lessons/resources; provide professional development for teachers; support more field trips; develop into a full semester course as a potential substitute for Programs In Government (PIG) or Public Policy.

Goal 3c. Develop a Service-Learning Program (*Long-Term*)

Objective 3c.1: develop a service-learning template and facilitate projects

Objective 3c.2: Identify and secure partnerships for service-learning projects

Goal 3d. Develop the Keep Rockland Beautiful Sustainability Center (*Long-Term*)

Objective 3d.1: Establish KRB's leadership role in the County as an environmental education resource center/clearinghouse

ACTIONS: Beginning in 2015 and beyond, plan, lead and coordinate an Environmental Education Consortium; update the SEER report, manage REES, develop a Green School Program

4. *Communications, Marketing and Outreach*

Goal 4a. Strengthen the KRB brand in Rockland County (*Immediate, Interim and Long-Term*)

Objective 4a.1: Develop branded, consistent materials for KRB staff and Board to use in all their communications

ACTIONS:

1. Create 60- to 90-second PSA on 'who we are and what we do' that incorporates before- and after-images (interim – by July 2015) At each event, assure a committee member is assigned to take photos that can be integrated into movies/PSAs
2. Assure performance outcome data (e.g. "Ed Day maps") are presented at our public events on posters
3. Continue updating the "Who's on the Board" page to website with member bios and photos (immediate – by January 2015).
4. Continue building upon marketing through social media outlets such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Pinterest to further blanket market (ongoing)
5. Create bold, simplified banners for the Great American Cleanup – KRB logo with corporate 'thank you,' not recruitment...then list multiple sponsors on a separate banner (immediate – by February 2015).
6. Create KRB-branded trash bags (with sponsored bag tags?), water bottles, anti-bacterial wash, work gloves, foldable shopping carts, and car trash containers, for cleanups and to promote continued anti-littering (interim – by Dec 2015)
7. KRB lime green hat
8. Develop signage for garden centers to show support of KRB (long-term – by Dec 2016)
9. Assure all educational materials have KRB branding, so that all materials students take home have consistent brand, with possible information for parents to learn more (*done! December 2014*)
10. Assure each event/campaign committee Chair consults with communications/marketing team
11. Highlight our brand as an immediately recognized acronym –e.g., KRB versus Keep Rockland Beautiful (Dec 2017)

Objective 4a.2: Develop a communications calendar and plan that integrates targeted messages and branded materials in support of recurring campaigns, including communications strategies for each of our major events (incorporate into continuity books)

Objective 4a.3: Expand media and outreach methods by leveraging KRB Board members' affiliations

ACTIONS:

- * Develop sub-plans for individuals – potential new members who are like-minded but don't know how to get involved - and group members – organizations who are like-minded, but need to get involved (long term – Dec 2016 and beyond).
- * Assign Board members to write one letter each per year to editors of local print/electronic media outlets, such as LoHud, Rockland County Times, WRRCR, Patch, etc. (immediate and ongoing)
- * Identify locally-based trade magazines/association publications with linkages to individuals with other memberships – e.g., Jack – trails; Spencer – law; Ken – finance. (interim – by July 2015))

Objective 6a.5: Incorporate relevant data into communications, marketing and donor development activities to strengthen KRB value

ACTIONS: Continue to use reliable, timely data in press releases; to recognize communities; to demonstrate to local governments how KRB activities impact their constituents' quality of life; to conduct budgeting and make informed projections; to focus Board and Executive Director internal reporting; and to provide regular feedback to partner organizations, such as Rockland Waste Authority, Highways, and Public Transportation.

5. Fundraising and Development

Goal 5a. Maintain and increase revenues to grow annual budget (*Immediate and ongoing*)

Objective 5a.1: assess current grants, and explore additional opportunities from private, government, and corporate sources

ACTIONS: Enlist Board members to work within professional networks for open solicitations, and continue seeking assistance from professional grant-writing consultant who can secure funding for very low cost to organization.

Objective 5a.2: build a 'top sponsor' program

ACTIONS:

1. Define sponsorship category limits
2. Institute 'umbrella sponsorship program' for an organization wishing to sponsor the GAC and Gala, supporting KRB as a larger partner
3. Explore co-branding with major organization sponsors such as Orange and Rockland

6. Data Collection and Evaluation

Goal 6a. Develop data information systems needed for outcome measures to gauge KRB's success in cleanups, environmental education and beautification programs. (*Long-Term Goal – developed and piloted by December 2016*)

Cleanups: To increase the number of litter-free roadway miles from a baseline of ____ in 2015 to a goal of ____ by ____.

Objective 6a.1: Improve accuracy, consistency, and use of current cleanup campaign data repositories for information we need to measure outcomes

ACTIONS: strengthen the cleanup database to improve accuracy, timeliness and quality key administrative data, such as number of volunteers, number of bags of trash collected, bags of recyclables collected, tires and industrial trash collected, number of hours worked, number of cleanups coordinated, number of sites

Environmental Education: To increase the number of Earth BEAT programs delivered as a percentage of elementary and middle school classrooms from a baseline of ___% in 2015 to a goal of ___% by ____.

Objective: Develop pre- and post-awareness survey to gauge knowledge impact the Earth BEAT program is having on Rockland County

To increase the number of Rockland PLUS schools and students participating as a percentage of high schools from a baseline of ___% in 2015 to a goal of ___% by ____.

Objective: Develop pre- and post-awareness survey to gauge knowledge impact the Earth BEAT program is having on Rockland County

ACTIONS: strengthen the education database to improve accuracy, timeliness and quality key administrative data, such as number of students, number of schools, number of classrooms, dollars generated

Beautification: To increase the number of beautification sites and the number of artful receptacles from a baseline of ____ in 2015 to a goal of ____ by ____.

