

Keep Iowa Beautiful®

KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE



Photo Credit: Chris Ewan, Honorable Mention, Iowans in Action

[14th Annual Keep Iowa Beautiful Photography Contest Submission](#)

December 2024 Newsletter

Nine New Towns Join Hometown Pride!

Keep Iowa Beautiful is proud to announce the addition of nine new towns to its successful [Hometown Pride program](#). The communities—Albert City, Alta, Aurelia, Lake Park, Lakeside, Marathon, Royal, Sioux Rapids, and Storm Lake—are now actively participating in the program.



We are also excited to introduce Carissa Harvey as the new Hometown Pride Community Coach for these towns. Carissa brings over 15 years of experience in plan development and implementation, grant writing and administration, project management, and code development. She has taken part in a variety of quality-of-life projects including those focused on public art, recreation, downtown development, and more. Harvey holds an undergraduate degree in Community and Regional Planning and a graduate certificate in GIS from Iowa State University.

“It’s refreshing to see these communities ready to jump in. Each one has many unique and exciting things happening, and I’m grateful to have the opportunity to help them take their betterment efforts even further,” said Harvey.

Andy Frantz, Executive Director of Keep Iowa Beautiful, emphasized the impact of the Hometown Pride program: “The Hometown Pride program empowers local leaders and volunteers to strengthen their communities through strategic planning and meaningful projects. We look forward to seeing the positive transformation ahead.”

Keep Iowa Beautiful is committed to building strong, sustainable communities across the state and is excited to support this new chapter of growth and collaboration in Albert City, Alta, Aurelia, Lake Park, Lakeside, Marathon, Royal, Sioux Rapids, and Storm Lake.



Hometown Pride News and Updates



Pocahontas Hometown Pride's Kaleidoscopes Project

Pocahontas County has unveiled five giant kaleidoscopes, made possible by a Rural Enrichment Grant from the [Iowa Economic Development Authority \(IEDA\)](#). These attractions are currently on display in Fonda, Laurens, Rolfe, and Pocahontas, with plans to expand to every town in the County. Start planning your kaleidoscope tour of Pocahontas County today and experience these unique pieces of art firsthand!



Clinton Hometown Pride's Art Accelerator Program Grant

Clinton Hometown Pride celebrated a big milestone: receiving a \$23,000 grant from the [Iowa Arts Council](#)! This funding will support an Art Accelerator program that will focus on public art projects throughout the community in 2025 and 2026. The Committee also held their first Trivia Night last month drawing an impressive turnout of over 80 participants across 10 teams.





Peosta Hometown Pride's Kelly Oaks Park Ceremony

Peosta Hometown Pride recently celebrated a groundbreaking ceremony for the Kelly Oaks Park project with a unique community touch—shovels painted by elementary school students. The event featured engaging activities for kids, marking the start of construction on a new pavilion. The project received a \$75,000 IDNR REAP grant, underscoring its importance to the community. Construction is underway on the multi-use trail around the park and playground!



Shellsburg Hometown Pride's Gold Medal Flour Mural Community Celebration

Shellsburg Hometown Pride recently hosted a community celebration to mark the successful restoration of the historic Gold Medal Flour mural!

In 2023, the Hometown Pride committee identified restoring this iconic mural as a top priority. The Shellsburg Area Community Group rallied the community with a grassroots fundraising campaign, ensuring the mural's preservation for future generations. This inspiring effort brought the community together and culminated in a joyous celebration of their shared accomplishment!



Click [here](#) to learn more about our Hometown Pride program.



Applications Now Open for 2025 Scholarship and Paint Iowa Beautiful Grants!

2025 Scholarship Grants

We are excited to announce the opening of applications for our [2025 scholarships](#)! Are you an Iowa high school senior with dreams of making a difference? Each year, Keep Iowa Beautiful awards three \$1,000 scholarships to students planning to attend an Iowa college or university. This scholarship program celebrates our commitment to supporting Iowa's youth and investing in the future of our communities.



ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS: 2025 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Three \$1,000 scholarships awarded to Iowa high school seniors

Applications due **January 31, 2025**

Application deadline: Friday, January 31st, 2025

Notification of grant awardees: April 2025

For details and to apply, click [here](#).



2025 Paint Iowa Beautiful Grants

Grant applications are opened for the [2025 Paint Iowa Beautiful program](#), a collaboration between Keep Iowa Beautiful and Diamond Vogel Paint. This program offers free paint to a diverse range of community projects, enhancing the aesthetics of local spaces.



Application deadline: Friday, February 14th, 2025

Notification of grant awardees: April 2025

For details and to apply, click [here](#).



Paint Iowa Beautiful Grants in Action

Benton County Conservation

Benton County Conservation located in Vinton, Iowa will be repainting posts and signs around their parks and recreation areas. Take a look at the progress on the Wildcat Pavilion!



Essex Community Club

Take a look at the Essex Community Club's incredible Paint Iowa Beautiful project! Club members worked together to power wash, scrape away old layers of paint, replace floorboards, and refresh the derby track's bandstand with a fresh coat of white paint—inside and out. Thanks to their hard work, this community space looks better than ever!

Downtown Partners, Inc.

What a difference a coat of black paint can make! Downtown Partners, Inc. recently gave the 35+-year-old flower planters in Downtown Burlington, Iowa, a fresh new look as part of their Paint Iowa Beautiful project. Volunteers received many compliments from community members on the transformation!



Click [here](#) to learn more about our Paint Iowa Beautiful program.

Keep Iowa Beautiful's 15th Annual Photo Contest Submissions Now Closed

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's photo contest! A panel of judges will now deliberate and select winners. Winning entries are expected to be announced in February 2025. Stay tuned on Keep Iowa Beautiful's social media for the announcements!



"The quality of this year's photo submissions was impressive, and it really shows how much Iowans care about their state," said Andy Frantz, Keep Iowa Beautiful Executive Director. "The submitted photographs truly showcase the beauty and spirit of Iowa."

To view prior years' winning photos, click [here](#).

Your Support Matters!

Consider supporting Keep Iowa Beautiful to help us continue our work improving Iowa communities! Remember: donations to Keep Iowa Beautiful are tax deductible!

Donations can be made online or checks can be mailed to our office:

Keep Iowa Beautiful
2910 Westown Pkwy. Suite 302
West Des Moines, IA 50266

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2910 Westown Parkway, Suite 302 | West Des Moines, IA 50266

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