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TO: Mayor Malakoutian and City Councilmembers

FROM: Emil A. King, Director
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SUBJECT: Keep Bellevue Beautiful Briefing

Program Overview

Keep Bellevue Beautiful (KBB) launched in 2023 under Council’s Safe, Clean, and Vibrant City Initiative and, through partnerships with the community, has grown into a citywide program focused on maintaining clean, welcoming public spaces. Through its three coordinated activities—Signature Streets litter cleanups, the Adopt-A-Street volunteer program, and abandoned shopping cart retrieval—the program combines resident reporting, volunteer stewardship, and contracted services to deliver consistent, visible improvements across Bellevue’s neighborhoods. These combined efforts help prevent blight, clean up streets, engage community members, and support an overall sense of community pride and civic responsibility.

Signature Streets is a city-run, volunteer-supported cleanup series focused on litter cleanup in areas of neighborhoods with high resident reports of litter. This year, Signature Streets will be coming to every Bellevue Neighborhood Area at least once. Residents are encouraged to join in with their neighbors and city staff to help make their neighborhood clean and welcoming.

Adopt-A-Street uses an adoption-driven model that empowers residents, businesses, and community groups to take long-term stewardship of cleaning up selected street segments through regular cleanups. KBB provides equipment and safety gear to support sponsors and works with the City of Bellevue’s waste management provider to dispose of bags of litter.

Abandoned Shopping Cart Retrieval Program deploys a contracted vendor to proactively remove abandoned carts from public areas and respond to community member reports of abandoned shopping carts. If anyone sees an abandoned shopping cart, they can report it using the MyBellevue app or by writing to KeepBellevueBeautiful@bellevuewa.gov.

Program Growth and Accomplishments

Since its inception, KBB has expanded from a small, staff-driven pilot into a core element of the city’s public space maintenance strategy. By 2025, KBB was operating at full scale, completing

more than 330 cleanups, retrieving over 3,195 abandoned carts, engaging 625 volunteers, and collecting more than 700 bags of litter. Corporate volunteer groups and neighborhood-based participation continued to grow, culminating in the program's largest single event, Amazon's corporate cleanup, with over 150 participants. Together, these contributions reflect Bellevue's strong culture of volunteerism and the community's interest in supporting cleaner public spaces.

As the program matures, its components continue to evolve. Adopt-A-Street now serves as the backbone of long-term community stewardship, with 60 active adopters contributing more than 115 cleanups since January 2026 and removing over 300 bags of litter. The Signature Streets program has shifted toward more regularized, data-informed deployment through the "26 for 26" initiative, which provides bi-weekly cleanups over the course of the year and ensures equitable neighborhood coverage guided by resident reporting and hotspot trends. Meanwhile, contracted shopping cart retrieval remains a key operational tool, removing thousands of carts annually and increasingly identifying routine hotspots near transit hubs, multifamily complexes, and retail centers. Ongoing coordination with the city's Code Compliance staff and retailers remains essential, as cart loss continues to be a recurring maintenance challenge requiring multi-departmental attention.

Looking Ahead

As Keep Bellevue Beautiful continues growing, the program remains focused on expanding citywide participation, improving data-informed deployment, and strengthening partnerships that support long-term public space stewardship. Key areas of focus include:

- Expanding recurring cleanup participation through Adopt-A-Street, Signature Streets, and increased business and community involvement
- Improving hotspot mapping and internal tracking to better prioritize cleanup and shopping cart retrieval efforts
- Strengthening coordination with neighborhood associations, retailers, volunteers, and internal departments
- Expanding education and outreach related to litter prevention, stewardship, and proper waste disposal
- Continuing proactive shopping cart retrieval strategies through hotspot monitoring and retailer coordination
- Improving communication and visibility around ongoing cleanup efforts and volunteer impact

Overall, KBB continues evolving toward a more consistent, data-informed, and community-supported approach to keeping Bellevue clean, welcoming, and cared for.

How to Stay Involved

Community members and businesses can support KBB by joining a cleanup, adopting a street segment, or organizing or joining a corporate volunteer event. The [Keep Bellevue Beautiful](#) website outlines ways to get involved and to learn more about litter cleanup in the community.