



Program Ideas: Safe Public Places Community Beautification

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The physical condition of neighborhoods and business districts conveys ownership and care and signals whether offenders should consider the area vulnerable to crime victimization or drug trafficking. Beautification projects -- trash cleanups, landscape enhancements, gardens -- also serve as a focus for community organizing. Community groups working with law enforcement, public works, or parks and recreation staff clean up public areas and abandoned lots. The project may reclaim a public space for neighborhood use, establish new green space, or mark neighborhood boundaries.

[Graffiti Removal](#)

Public works agencies can supply equipment and staff for larger projects, while landscaping firms or other businesses can donate supplies and plants. Publicity and coordination with other police-advised beautification projects help enhance the success of such efforts. Volunteer patrols help support maintenance, and publicity helps protect areas from future deterioration.

Examples

A successful Urban Forestry Program in Long Beach, California, planted 3,000 trees in three years, provided education and employment opportunities for residents in targeted communities, and supplies for volunteers' cleanup projects. Landscape improvements were linked with leadership development, community police centers, graffiti removal teams, and recreational services for youth.

The St. Petersburg, Florida, Neighborhood Partnership Program landscapes selected neighborhoods and awards grants for neighborhood cleanups, landscaping, signs, and park enhancements. It also coordinates housing construction and rehabilitation in targeted areas and promotes neighborhood festivals.

The Trust for Public Land supports dozens of groups throughout the country in their efforts to rehabilitate dilapidated properties and parks into green spaces for the community's recreational needs. It helped one New York City neighborhood convert derelict land into community gardens.

Pond Street in New Haven Connecticut, suffered from illegal drug sales, trash,

loiterers, and excessive noise. The Block Watch resolved to take back some streets by planting flowers along curbsides and in a blighted corner lot. They turned the neighborhood into a beautiful garden, and other cleanups seemed to flow naturally. The beautification idea has spread to other streets, and crime has receded.

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