



555 Walnut St. Abilene, Texas 79601
www.abilenetx.com

News Release

"We work together to build and maintain a community of the highest quality for present and future generations."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACTS:

Nicole Eaves, Stormwater Education Coordinator

Ph: 325-734-3301 Email: nicole.eaves@abilenetx.gov

Alaisha Montanez, Communications Manager

Ph: 325-676-6677 Cell: 325-513-9381 E-mail: alaisha.montanez@abilenetx.gov

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Abilene Receives Prestigious State Environmental Award

ABILENE, Texas - Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) has recognized Abilene as one of 10 winners of the 2018 Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA) for outstanding community **improvement**. The award is one of the most coveted annual environmental and community improvement honors in Texas. The winners will share \$2 million in landscape funding from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT); Abilene will receive \$290,000 for a landscaping project along a local state right-of-way.

"We are very excited and tremendously honored," says Nicole Eaves, Executive Director for **Keep Abilene Beautiful**. "This award means so much because it validates the hard work of our community to make Abilene a better place to live, work, and play. We are pleased to once again be the recipient of this TxDOT grant."

This is the 4th time Abilene has won the GCAA. Prior years (1992, 1996, and 2000) awards provided the landscaping on the southwest corner of N. 2nd and Treadaway along with the three stone and buffalo entrances into Abilene.

"Success is no accident but is the result of hard work, persistence, coordination and team efforts," said Srinivas Valavala, City's Stormwater Services Administrator. "We'd like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to numerous partners and volunteers that worked alongside KAB's mission as well as a big shout-out to current and ex-board members of KAB for their valuable time and commitment."

Communities submitted materials in one of 10 population categories and judges chose the winners based on their achievements in seven environmental and community improvement areas: community leadership and coordination, education, public awareness, litter prevention and cleanup, litter law and illegal dumping enforcement, beautification and community improvement, and solid waste management.

In 2017, KAB brought back the vintage "Myrtle's Coming, Get Your Bed Ready" campaign **selling 850 crape myrtles**. KAB paired up with many wonderful business and organizations to grow existing programs and to launch new ones like the Fall Arbor Day Tree Planting and Giveaway. TxDOT and KAB's Adopt-A-Highway/Street/Creek programs removed 25,940 pounds of litter with the help of just over 1,000 volunteers. And the City of Abilene opened the Citizens Convenience Station offering free disposal of bulky items year round to residents.

Keep Texas Beautiful and TxDOT first began working together in the late 1960s and have shared the common goals of making Texas roadways more attractive and safe for motorists and encouraging tourism. Since 1985, KTB has partnered with TxDOT to support its anti-litter and beautification programs such as Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off and the Governor's Community Achievement Awards. The GCAA program has recognized outstanding communities for more than 50 years, with TxDOT providing landscape funding since 1986.

"We're so thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with TxDOT on the GCAA Awards. Congrats to each of the award winners on their hard work beautifying communities across Texas!" says Suzanne Kho, Executive Director of Keep Texas Beautiful.

Abilene will receive its award on Tuesday, June 12, 2018 in Georgetown, Texas during KTB's 51st Annual Conference.

For more details about Keep Abilene Beautiful, please visit www.keepabilenebeautiful.org and for more information about this award visit <https://www.ktb.org/gcaa>.

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