



2026 Keep Akron Beautiful Community Appearance Index Results

July 9, 2026

Keep Akron Beautiful released the results of the 2026 Community Appearance Index (CAI), a nationally recognized assessment developed by Keep America Beautiful that provides an objective, data-driven snapshot of Akron's visible appearance.

The Community Appearance Index evaluates three key indicators that influence residents' quality of life and perceptions of their neighborhoods:

- Litter
- Illegal signs
- Graffiti

Three independent evaluators surveyed 63 locations across all ten Akron City Council wards, using a standardized four-point scale:

- 1 – Minimal or No Presence
- 2 – Light Presence
- 3 – Moderate Presence
- 4 – Heavy Presence

The Community Appearance Index serves as a benchmark to identify community needs, prioritize resources, and measure progress over time.

Category	Average Score	Overall Rating
Litter	2.14	High Presence
Illegal Signs	1.65	Light Presence
Graffiti	1.33	Minimal Presence

Ward Highlights

Litter

- Ward 5: 3.00 (Highest)
- Ward 4: 2.61
- Ward 3: 2.38

Illegal Signs

- Ward 4: 2.61 (Highest)
- Ward 6: 1.76
- Wards 1, 3, 5, and 9: 1.71–1.73

Graffiti

- Ward 5: 2.11 (Highest)

The 2026 survey reinforces several important trends throughout Akron. Litter remains Akron's greatest community appearance challenge.

With an average score of 2.14, litter continues to be the most visible issue affecting neighborhoods across the city. While Akron's overall rating falls within the Light Presence category, several locations scored significantly higher, helping identify where future cleanup and prevention efforts should be concentrated.

Illegal signs continue to impact neighborhood appearance. Illegal signs received an average score of 1.65, indicating continued opportunities for education, enforcement, and routine removal throughout the city.

Graffiti remains relatively low citywide.

Graffiti earned an average score of 1.33, reflecting minimal graffiti across most of Akron. These results demonstrate the effectiveness of ongoing graffiti abatement efforts and the rapid response partnership between Keep Akron Beautiful and the City of Akron.

Notably, nine of Akron's ten wards scored below 1.75 for graffiti, demonstrating that graffiti remains minimal throughout most of the city.

Why These Results Matter

The Community Appearance Index is much more than a report card, it is a roadmap.

When combined with daily field observations, resident reports, and operational data, these results help Keep Akron Beautiful and the City of Akron strategically direct resources where they will have the greatest impact.

The findings validate what crews see every day in neighborhoods across Akron. Whether responding to litter, illegal dumping, graffiti, or investing in tree planting, beautification projects, and community engagement, Keep Akron Beautiful is using this information to ensure time, funding, and resources are invested where they are needed most.

Looking Ahead

No single organization can keep Akron beautiful alone.

The 2026 Community Appearance Index reinforces the importance of continued collaboration among the City of Akron, Keep Akron Beautiful, neighborhood organizations, businesses, volunteers, and residents.

Together, we can reduce litter, remove illegal signs, respond quickly to graffiti, improve neighborhood appearance, and create a cleaner, safer, and more welcoming community.

As Keep Akron Beautiful celebrates its 45th Anniversary, the Community Appearance Index will continue to serve as an important benchmark for measuring progress and guiding the work necessary to build a cleaner, greener, and more beautiful Akron.

For more information visit www.keepakronbeautiful.org or contact Jacqui Ricchitui at jacqui@keepakronbeautiful.org.