

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Sustainable Highland Park's
2025 Year in Review

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Accomplishments and Goals

- Focus of January (re-organization) meeting with our beloved Tina announcing that she was retiring as SHP chairperson
- HP [Resolution in Support of the NJ Climate Superfund Act](#)
- New website launched/new platform Discord used (previously Slack)
- New and extensive year-round programming

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Sustainable Highland Park (SHP), the Borough's Green Team, is dedicated to educating and implementing sustainable actions and practices that improve the quality of life for all those who live, work, and visit Highland Park, NJ.

This includes environmental, economic, and social initiatives. In our capacity as the Green Team, Sustainable Highland Park aims to help the Borough maintain and advance our silver level [Sustainable Jersey](#) certification.

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK

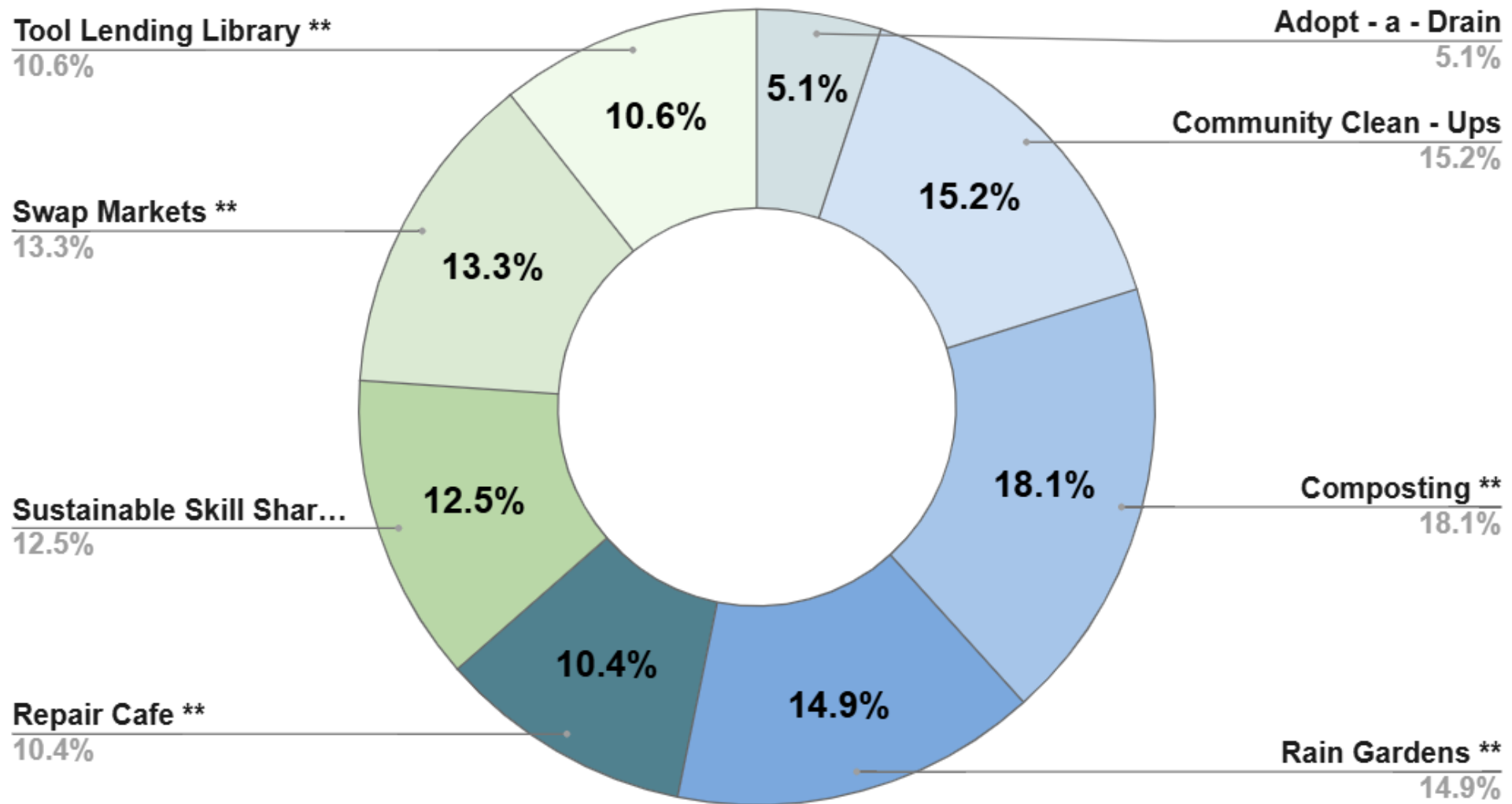


Earth Day Fair

- New this year - Earth Day Sandwich Boards - Welcome, Community & Resilience, Activism, Sustainability (re-usable)
- Branded our Safe Earth Zone within the Street Fair as the Green Zone where we educated, engaged and inspired our community to take action to create a just, healthy, and sustainable world.
- Community Outreach where we rolled out Sustainable Highland Park initiative(s) sign-up form

TOTALS	
Program Name	Totals
Adopt - a - Drain	19
Community Clean - Ups	57
Composting **	68
Rain Gardens **	56
Repair Cafe **	39
Sustainable Skill Sharing Series	47
Swap Markets **	50
Tool Lending Library **	40
TOTAL FORM RESPONSES	139

SHP Volunteer - Program Interest Distribution



SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



New Website Launched – Early May

- Thanks to a \$2K grant, SHP retained Moo Designs to design a new website
- Lisa and Claudia are continually updating with new content

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



New (or Renewed) This Year

- Park Partners Award – Raritan Avenue Rain Gardens Revitalization
- Sustainability Spotlight (newsletter content) initiated in May
- Collaboration with Boro's Communication's Team (Harry and Monica)
- SHP participated in Board, Commissions and Committee's meeting led by Teri Jover (BA) and Jake Callahan (Assistant BA)
- Hybrid monthly SHP meetings, use of SHP@hpboro.com account
- Great NEW Skill Sharing Series, Clothing Swap and Houseplant Swap

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Sustainability Spotlight

- LRWP – Derek Hartwick – May 2025
- HP Thrift - HS Student – Emma Shannon – June 2025
- HP Ecology and Environmental Club – Mark Lesko – July 2025
- Local Artist – Julia Win – August 2025
- The Upcycle Thrift – Johnny Wood – September 2025
- Little Free Garden – Will Payne – October 2025
- The HP Native Plant Sanctuary – November 2025

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLAND PARK 2025 WRAPPED



- 14 Clean Ups
- 6 Workshops
- 4 Swap and Low-Waste Events
- 3 Days of Rain Garden Maintenance
- 3 Big Community Events
- 2 Clean and Green Weekends
- Almost 1000 plants given away!

1,100+ POUNDS OF TRASH COLLECTED



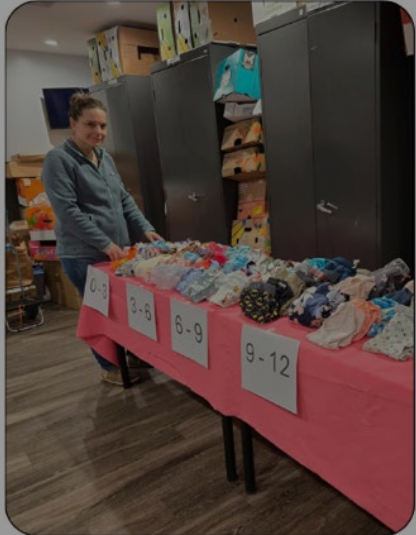
SHP spent an entire day's worth of hours making Highland Park cleaner, greener, and healthier.



14 clean ups
182 volunteers
1,136.5 lbs of trash collected
25 hours of clean up

4

SWAP & LOW WASTE EVENTS



- 👕 2 Children's Clothing Swaps
- 🎃 Halloween Swap
- 🌱 Houseplant Swap



6

WORKSHOPS





1. No-Waste Cooking
2. Valentine's Upcycling
3. Holiday Upcycling
4. Food Gardening
5. Native Plants
6. Plant Propagation


3

COMMUNITY EVENTS



 Earth Day Fair

 Parkstock

 Arts in the Park



3

DAYS OF RAIN GARDENS MAINTENANCE



Did you know?

Rain gardens can help filter out pollutants in runoff and provide food and shelter for butterflies, song birds and other wildlife.

(US, EPA 2025)

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



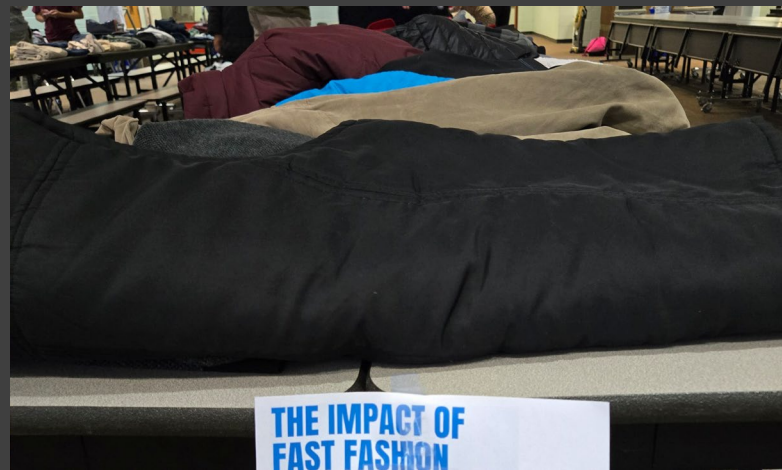
School Collaboration

- SHP is involved with and/or communicates with multi schools
- Representatives for both the District and School's Green Team (both SJ recertifications) – school's goal (2026) is Silver Certification



Farm Bot Planting, Tree Ambassador Program, Used Notebook Drive and Clothing Swap

2025



**SUSTAINABLE
HIGHLANDPARK**



Earth Day Fair

- Signature SHP event;
- Fourth year of working with Main Street at the HP Street Fair, excellent attendance; and
- Some participation by HP Boards & Commissions with good attendance by other organizations (despite the weather)

Earth Day Fair 2025





SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Public Outreach

- Street Fair – Earth Day Event
- National Night Out - native plant giveaway
- Arts in the Park - native plant giveaway
- Irving School Earth Day Table
- Clean & Green Weekend – Spring and Fall
- Clean-ups with Volunteer Organizations



Irving School Earth Day – April 2025

2025 SHP Events Clean & Green and Arts in the Park



More Arts in the Park and Clean & Green Weekend



Fall Clean and Green Weekend



Skills Sharing Series and House Plant Swap – Fall 2025



SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Year-Round Bi-Monthly Clean-Ups

- Thanks to Mark's commitment for this year-round SHP program
- Since July 2022 to date, 71 clean-ups, 532 volunteers, 102.5 hours, 3,748 lbs (1.87 tons), including 11 tires

2025 Clean-ups



SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Adopt-a-Drain Program

- Recently revamped, program now in its 4th year
- Thanks to Laura for taking over as the lead on this program who also created an interactive map
- Periodic reminders to participants
- Need more outreach into different sections of HP

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Ongoing Programming

- Led by Tami, second Monday of the month
- Focuses on outcome of community surveys (e.g., skill sharing series)
- Always encouraging new ideas to turn into new programs, always looking for new volunteers
- Creating of programming flyers, a collaborative effort

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Ongoing Social Media Presence

- Led by KT (and now Sophia too)
- Features SHP programs as well as other items from our newsletter
- Also posts other content regarding sustainability
- Receives and shares public comments on posts

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Restricting Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers

- Worked with other municipalities on this issue and help an event in Edison
- Collaboration with HP Board of Health and HP EC
- New SJ action and working with Borough over whether we can make some progress on it.

Climate Impacts of Gas Leaf Blowers

- ❑ Gas Leaf Blowers Burn Fossil Fuels
 - ❑ 2 Stroke model both inefficient and polluting
 - ❑ 4 Stroke polluting as well
- ❑ Burning Fossil Fuels is the Main Driver of Climate Change
- ❑ Gas Leaf Blowers Emit **Carbon Dioxide, Methane and Nitrous Oxide**, All Potent Greenhouse Gases Heating Up Our Atmosphere and Oceans
- ❑ Restricting or Banning Gas Leaf Blowers Would Significantly Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Help New Jersey Meet its Climate Goals



SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Sneak Peak

- Working with and new relationships with other HP Committees and Commissions
- Collaboration/Outreach with nearby Communities Committees and/or Commissions
- Inaugural Repair Café
- Tina's Memorial Garden Planting and Ceremony

SUSTAINABLE HIGHLANDPARK



Thank you to everyone for your tremendous support and tireless efforts in making 2025 a successful year.

Looking forward to 2026!