

BEACON



SPOTLIGHT
AWARD

WINNER

BEST PRACTICE
ACTIVITIES



City of La Mesa

Sustainability Best Practice Activities



ILG INSTITUTE FOR
LOCAL GOVERNMENTSM
Promoting Good Government at the Local Level

City of La Mesa

California communities are leading the fight against climate change. From small projects to large-scale programs, cities and counties are making great strides to create healthy, sustainable and economically prosperous communities. Participants in ILG's Beacon Program serve as leaders in this effort, making measureable contributions to reducing energy and greenhouse gas emissions, and sharing their sustainability best practices.

This document represents a collection of activities your agency has completed in 10 areas of sustainability. While local governments have a wide range of choices available to address climate change, these activities represent the unique opportunities and values in your community. These voluntary actions are essential to achieving California's goals to save energy, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and create more sustainable communities.

SPOTLIGHT AWARD

Areas of Accomplishment		SILVER LEVEL	GOLD LEVEL	PLATINUM LEVEL
	Agency GHG Reductions			
	Community GHG Reductions			2015 (53%)
	Agency Energy Savings			
	Natural Gas Savings			
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities	2013	2015	
	Beacon Award			

Cities and counties throughout the Golden State should be proud of the accomplishments made through the hard work, innovation and collective community action. The Institute for Local Government applauds your achievements and thanks you for your continued participation in the Beacon Program.

The Beacon Program is sponsored by the Institute for Local Government and the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative (SEEC). SEEC is an alliance between three statewide non-profit organizations and California's four Investor-Owned Utilities. The Beacon Program is funded by California utility ratepayers and administered by Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison and Southern California Gas Company under the auspices of the California Public Utilities Commission.



Energy Efficiency and Conservation Activities

Silver

1. The city is working with the California Center for Sustainable Energy to host periodic home energy upgrade workshops for the public.

Gold

2. The windows and doors were replaced at the community center and recreation center with more energy efficient products.
3. High efficiency induction street light replacements were installed and have reduced the city's street light energy costs by approximately half.

Platinum

4. All new city buildings meet California energy standards and have fluorescent lighting. The new police station has a high-efficiency HVAC system.
5. The city has retrofitted all traffic signals with green and red LED (light-emitting diode) lights.
6. Helix Water District continues to report water conservation, reducing the amount of wastewater necessitating treatment.
7. Energy audits performed on city facilities and operations through SANDAG's Energy Roadmap Program.
8. Smart meters installed throughout city facilities that are more accurate and allow customers to view close to real-time data on their use.





Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

Silver

1. 2,741 square feet of grass turf was removed in 2014 at the community center and replaced with drought tolerant landscaping with the assistance of grants from the Metropolitan Water District, the San Diego County Water Authority, and the Helix Water District.

Gold

2. Two lawns at city hall were removed and replaced by drought-tolerant landscaping with irrigation drip systems, which are expected to save 46,000 gallons of water annually.
3. Storm water programs and ordinances were updated to comply with an updated storm water permit.

Platinum

4. Irrigation systems have been upgraded at all parks, several landscaped medians and most facilities, resulting in more efficient water use.
5. EDCO station in La Mesa accepts cooking fats, oils and grease for free to be recycled into biofuel by a local company in San Diego. The Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Control Program was implemented to help reduce blockages within the wastewater system which can lead to overflows and impact surface water quality. Staff enrolls food service establishments which are required to participate in the program and the majority of applicable establishments were issued a five-year FOG permit.
6. The city is actively upgrading the wastewater collection system to mitigate any storm water inflow or infiltration into the collection system. Reducing this burden on the treatment plant results in lower environmental impacts to the plant and the surrounding environment.
7. Information kiosks are located in four city parks as part of the city's storm water pollution prevention efforts.
8. Staff participates annually in the Creek to Bay Cleanup and Coastal Cleanup Day events.





Green Building Activities

Silver

1. LEED standards are incorporated into the design of several facilities including the police station, Fire Administration/Station 11 and a cool roof on the community center. LEED certification is encouraged for all buildings and developments.

Gold

2. Through the city's design review process, new development is encouraged to incorporate energy conservation and green building concepts in the review of new development projects.
3. The city enforces the California Energy Efficiency Standards and the adopted California Green Building Code regulating energy conservation techniques, materials and appliances in the construction of buildings by the private sector.

Platinum

4. La Mesa has a sustainable building task force that includes representatives from various fields within the building industry and other groups to evaluate the feasibility of integrating sustainable building techniques into all new buildings, as well as major retrofits.
5. Installed a cool roof on the La Mesa Community Center.
6. The city replaced older backup generators with cleaner, more energy-efficient units at the new fire and police facilities.
7. The city is working to implement a construction and demolition online tracking system that actively assists projects in gaining LEED credits.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Silver

1. All playground upgrades and replacement use recycled materials when available, including flooring materials that are either recycled tires or wood chips, depending on grant availability.

Gold

2. The city has warehouse space devoted to used office equipment, supplies, and furniture for reuse by departments.
3. The city's mandatory Recycling Ordinance is enforced and has a citywide compliance rate among commercial businesses and multifamily properties of 95%, and in the most recent Annual Report to CalRecycle, the 2014 estimated trash disposal rate by residents was 3.5 pounds/person/day (PPD) and 8.3 PPD by employees of local businesses. This is lower than the maximum disposal allowed in La Mesa, 6.2 PPD and 13.8 PPD respectively, under AB 939 which mandates 50% diversion from landfills.

Platinum

4. An aerosol recycling system captures propellant for safe disposal.
5. Two free paper shredding events were held for residents. Over 1,165 vehicle loads were dropped at the annual Spring Cleanup event at EDCO Station, weighing over 360.16 tons. Nearly 80 tons was diverted for recycling.
6. A Backyard Composting Program is available for residents in which they can purchase discounted bins from Dixieline ProBuild in La Mesa. City hall has a compost bin for use by employees.
7. Using a grant from CalRecycle, the city is distributing thousands of reusable recycling bags to multifamily complexes to help residents separate and carry recyclables to collection bins.
8. The city's waste and recycling hauler, now accepts all rigid plastics through its curbside collection to allow for more comprehensive recycling.
9. Recycling containers are located in the downtown village, as well as all city parks and facilities.
10. An aerosol recycling system captures propellant for safe disposal. This is done by and for the city Public Works Operations Division.





Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

Silver

1. Vehicles' telematics devices were installed in 42 Public Works vehicles in November 2014, which results in reduced idling times and increased fuel efficiency.

Gold

2. New police patrol vehicles using the new Ford designs are 14% more fuel efficient in city driving than the models they are replacing.
3. The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District has new clean-diesel buses which replaced less efficient vehicles more than 20 years old.

Platinum

4. Two diesel and seven gasoline Public Works trucks were replaced with new, lower emission models.
5. Vending miser systems were installed on machines at city facilities to reduce energy use during evenings and weekends.
6. The city currently purchases Energy Star compliant equipment and technology.
7. Periodic public auctions are held for surplus items.
8. The city has a formal written policy in the city's purchasing manual for procurement of recycled products and sustainable purchasing is considered for all materials and items.





Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

Silver

1. In 2014, 283 photovoltaic solar system permits were issued in La Mesa, a 71% increase in the number of solar permits issued in the prior year.

Gold

2. The city council adopted resolutions in 2014 to participate in two Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Programs, known as Home Energy Renovation Opportunity (HERO) and "Figtree". Since the HERO Program became effective in November 2014, HERO reports the following statistics for the City of La Mesa: 32 complete projects, \$917,960 funded, seven estimated jobs created, \$1.5 million estimated in economic stimulus.
3. AIMS fuelmaster automatic fuel monitoring devices, currently used on all EMS vehicles, are installed on all new vehicles and will be installed on existing vehicles.

Platinum

4. The city owns four hybrid vehicles for use by the city's building inspectors and parking enforcement, which reduce the fuel needed for local use.
5. The city has retrofitted nine diesel vehicles, partially with grant funding, to reduce emissions in compliance with the state's tier three requirements.
6. EDCO pulled building permits in the Spring of 2015 to construct a natural gas fuel distribution station that will be open to the public in the industrial area.
7. Solar power is used for radar feedback signs on Fletcher Parkway and Amaya Drive, as well as three city street lights and updated parking meters in the downtown business district.





Efficient Transportation Activities

Silver

1. Work began in July 2014 on the Downtown Village Streetscape Improvement Project. The scope of work includes new sidewalks with enhanced crosswalks and bulbouts at intersections to improve walkability. Improvements are near the La Mesa Boulevard Trolley Station to improve connections to transit. Three bike corrals will be installed with the project in support of biking.

Gold

2. La Mesa earned the most walkable city designation by WalkSanDiego. The regional walk scorecard measures how San Diego's regional cities are doing to respond to the call for more walkable neighborhoods. La Mesa emerged as the top scoring city due to their continuing investment and focus on infrastructure upgrades and pedestrian safety.
3. The city encourages non-automobile transportation such as more sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian-friendly zones supported by the Sidewalk Master Plan and the Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan.

Platinum

4. Sidewalks were recently added to the east side of Glen Street from Lemon Avenue to Springview Lane as part of the Sidewalk Master Plan, which focuses construction where it is most needed, improving the walkability of the community.
5. A Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan has been adopted in accordance with AB 1358 "complete streets" legislation funded by a \$75,000 SANDAG grant awarded in July 2009. The plan was upgraded with a "safe routes to transit" component funded by a second \$50,000 SANDAG grant awarded in February 2011.
6. The University Avenue Revitalization Plan is complete, which will improve walkability along the major thoroughfare once the project is completed. Allison Avenue between University Avenue and Palm Avenue was upgraded for better walkability including two new mid-block crosswalks at the community library and trolley station that include sensor-activated flashing LED lights.





Land Use and Community Design Activities

Silver

1. A model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance was adopted in 2010 in accordance with AB 325 that complies with the state's requirements for water conservation.

Gold

2. Existing policies reduce urban sprawl, preserve open space and create a more compact urban community. The mixed use urban overlay zone supports compact urban development and pedestrian oriented neighborhoods.
3. The General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Element encourages the use of greenery in design.

Platinum

4. The city has been recognized as a Tree City USA since 1980.





Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

Silver

1. The city has completed the SANDAG Energy Roadmap Program and a report has been completed based on energy audits on city facilities and operations, which will be used to look for ways to reduce energy consumption.

Gold

2. The La Mesa Centennial General Plan was adopted and the final EIR was certified by the city council on July 9, 2013. The new General Plan includes goals, objectives, and policies that further environmental sustainability, health and wellness in the community. The final EIR contains a mitigation measure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that states the city will prepare and adopt, within 18 months, a plan to reduce GHG emissions, i.e. a Climate Action Plan.
3. Funding from an SDG&E Emerging Cities Program for local governments grant has been awarded to the city to help prepare a Climate Action Plan (CAP). A draft CAP was released in April 2015 for public review.

Platinum

4. The city is working on an updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory through a partnership with the Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC) and the University of San Diego. The update is necessary to develop a Climate Action Plan, a comprehensive project for city operations and the community.
5. The city supports walking as a means of offsetting carbon emissions by highlighting walking opportunities on its city website.
6. The city maintains 14 parks (approx. 1:4000 residents) and many include native vegetation, such as the natural trails at Harry Griffen Regional Park.





Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

Silver

1. The city had a table at EarthFair 2015 in Balboa Park to promote the CAP and other environmental programs, such as graywater, composting, and homemade cleaning supplies.

Gold

2. The city is working with the California Center for Sustainable Energy to host home energy upgrade workshops for the public in the summer and winter.
3. The Environmental Sustainability Commission is comprised of members from environmentally linked industries and the general public to address issues and establish guidelines related to climate change.

Platinum

4. The Environmental Sustainability Commission's Graywater Education Program will benefit both residents and businesses through brochures and information that are available at city hall and on the city website.
5. La Mesa e-Gov allows anyone 24-hour access to services electronically, including announcements of programs and events through Twitter, Nixle and Notify Me. The La Mesa FOCUS online publication includes various items on environmental topics throughout the year and information on various environmental topics is available through links to SDG&E, Helix Water District, EDCO, CalRecycle and the EPA.
6. The Helix Water District hosted a drought workshop on April 17th 2014.
7. Information kiosks are located in four city parks as part of the city's storm water pollution prevention efforts and staff participates annually in the Creek to Bay Cleanup and Coastal Cleanup Day events.
8. The "Sustain La Mesa" Environmental Festival is held annually in Harry Griffen Park and includes dozens of booths and activities, as well as expert speakers promoting a variety of environmental topics. The festival also features a recycling zone for electronic waste and hard to recycle materials including plastic wrap/bags and Styrofoam.





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