

GOLD LEVEL AWARD WINNER

BEACON  
SPOTLIGHT  
AWARD  
WINNER  
BEST PRACTICE  
ACTIVITIES



# City of La Mesa

Sustainability Best Practices Activities



**ILG** INSTITUTE FOR  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT<sup>SM</sup>  
*Promoting Good Government at the Local Level*

## About This Document

This document tracks and shares local agency best practice activities completed and counted as part of a city or county's participation in the climate change and sustainability recognition program, the Beacon Program: Local Leadership toward Solving Climate Change. The Beacon Program is a statewide program recognizing cities and counties that are working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save energy and adopt policies and programs that promote sustainability.

The Beacon Program is sponsored by the Institute for Local Government and the Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative. The Statewide Energy Efficiency Collaborative (SEEC) provides support to cities and counties to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions and save energy. SEEC is an alliance between three statewide non-profit organizations and California's four Investor-Owned Utilities. It builds upon the unique resources, expertise and local agency relationships of each partner.




## Supporting California local governments

The Beacon Program is funded by California utility customers 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.



## SPOTLIGHT AWARD

Areas of Accomplishment

		SILVER LEVEL	GOLD LEVEL	PLATINUM LEVEL
	Agency GHG Reductions			
	Community GHG Reductions			52% Reduction
	Agency Energy Savings			
	Natural Gas Savings			
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities		3 in each of 10 categories	



**City of La Mesa**

Best Practice Activities

[www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/](http://www.ca-ilg.org/BeaconAward/)



# Energy Efficiency and Conservation Activity

Level	Energy Efficiency and Conservation Activity	Reported
<b>Silver</b>	1. The city is working with the California Center for Sustainable Energy to host periodic <a href="#">home energy upgrade workshops</a> for the public.	<b>2015</b>

Level	Energy Efficiency and Conservation Activities	Reported
<b>Gold</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The windows and doors were replaced at the community center and recreation center with more energy efficient products.</li> <li>2. High efficiency induction street light replacements were installed and have reduced the city's street light energy costs by approximately half.</li> </ol>	<b>2015</b>

Level	Energy Efficiency & Conservation Activities	Reported
<b>Platinum</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All new city buildings meet California energy standards and have fluorescent lighting. The new police station has a high-efficiency HVAC system.</li> <li>2. The city has <a href="#">retrofitted</a> all traffic signals with green and red LED (light-emitting diode) lights.</li> <li>3. Helix water district continues to report water conservation, reducing the amount of wastewater necessitating treatment.</li> <li>4. Energy audits performed on city facilities and operations through San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Energy Roadmap Program.</li> <li>5. Smart meters installed throughout city facilities that are more accurate and allow customers to view close to real-time data on their use.</li> </ol>	<b>2015</b>







# Water & Wastewater Systems Activity

Level	Water & Wastewater Systems Activity	Reported
Silver	1. 2,741 square feet of grass turf was removed in 2014 at the community center and replaced with drought tolerant <a href="#">landscaping</a> with the assistance of grants from the metropolitan water district, the San Diego County water authority and the helix water district	2015

Level	Water & Wastewater Systems Activities	Reported
Gold	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two lawns at city hall were removed and replaced by drought-tolerant <a href="#">landscaping</a> with irrigation drip systems which are expected to save 46,000 gallons of water annually.</li> <li><a href="#">Storm water</a> programs and ordinances were updated to comply with an updated storm water permit.</li> </ol>	2015

Level	Water and Wastewater Systems Activities	Reported
Platinum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irrigation systems have been upgraded at all parks, several landscaped medians and most facilities resulting in more efficient water use.</li> <li>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 <a href="#">Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG)</a> 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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Information kiosks are located in four city parks as part of the city's storm water pollution prevention efforts.</li> <li>Staff participates annually in the <a href="#">Creek to Bay Cleanup and Coastal Cleanup Day events</a>.</li> </ol>	2015





# Green Building Activity

Level	Green Building Activity	Reported
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.	2015

Level	Green Building Activities	Reported
Gold	2. Through the <a href="#">city's design</a> review process, new development is encouraged to incorporate energy conservation and green building concepts in the review of new development projects.  2. 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.	2015

Level	Green Building Activities	Reported
Platinum	1. 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.  2. Installed a cool roof on the La Mesa community center.  3. The city replaced older backup generators with cleaner, more energy-efficient units at the new fire and police facilities.  4. The city is working to implement a Construction and Demolition online tracking system that actively assists projects in gaining LEED credits.	2015





# Waste Reduction and Recycling Activity

Level	Waste Reduction Activity	Reported
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.	2015

Level	Waste Reduction Activities	Reported
Gold	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The city has warehouse space devoted to used office equipment, supplies, and furniture for reuse by departments.</li> <li>2. 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.</li> </ol>	2015

Level	Waste Reduction Activities	Reported
Platinum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An aerosol recycling system captures propellant for safe disposal.</li> <li>2. Two free <a href="#">paper shredding events</a> were held for residents. Over 1,165 vehicle loads were dropped at the annual <a href="#">Spring Cleanup</a> event at EDCO Station, weighing over 360.16 tons. Nearly 80 tons was diverted for recycling.</li> <li>3. A backyard <a href="#">composting program</a> 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.</li> <li>4. Using a grant from the department of resources recycling and recovery (CalRecycle) the city is distributing thousands of reusable recycling bags to multifamily complexes to help residents separate and carry recyclables to collection bins, along with space-saving can crushers and hundreds of recycling receptacles for common areas such as pools and laundry rooms.</li> </ol>	2015





# Waste Reduction and Recycling Activity

Level	Waste Reduction Activities	Reported
<b>Platinum</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. The city's waste and recycling hauler, now accepts all rigid plastics through its curbside collection to allow for more comprehensive recycling.</li><li>6. Recycling containers are located in the downtown village as well as all city parks and facilities.</li><li>7. An aerosol recycling system captures propellant for safe disposal. This is done by and for the city public works operations division.</li></ol>	<b>2015</b>







# Climate-friendly Purchasing Activity

Level	Climate-Friendly Activity	Reported
<b>Silver</b>	1. Vehicles' telematics devices were installed in 42 public works vehicles in November, 2014 which should result in reduced idling times and increased fuel efficiency.	<b>2015</b>

Level	Climate-Friendly Activities	Reported
<b>Gold</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New police patrol vehicles using the new Ford designs are 14% more fuel efficient in city driving than the models they are replacing.</li> <li>2. The La Mesa-Spring Valley School District has new clean-diesel buses which replaced less efficient vehicles more than 20 years old.</li> </ol>	<b>2015</b>

Level	Climate-Friendly Activities	Reported
<b>Platinum</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Two diesel and seven gasoline public works trucks were replaced with new, lower emission models.</li> <li>2. Vending miser systems were installed on machines at city facilities to reduce energy use during evenings and weekends.</li> <li>3. The city currently purchases Energy Star compliant equipment and technology.</li> <li>4. Periodic public auctions are held for surplus items.</li> <li>5. 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.</li> </ol>	<b>2015</b>





# Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activity

Level	Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Fuels Activity	Reported
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.	2015

Level	Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Fuels Activity	Reported
Gold	<p>1. The city council adopted <u>resolutions</u> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 complete projects (160 applications submitted; 114 applications approved)</li> <li>• \$917,960 funded (\$9.1 million approved)</li> <li>• Seven estimated jobs created</li> <li>• \$1.5 million estimated in economic stimulus</li> </ul> <p>2. 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.</p>	2015

Level	Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Fuels Activity	Reported
Platinum	<p>1. 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.</p> <p>2. The city has retrofitted nine diesel vehicles, partially with grant funding, to reduce emissions in compliance with the state's Tier three requirements.</p> <p>3. 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.</p> <p>4. 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.</p>	2015





# Efficient Transportation Activity

Level	Efficient Transportation Activity	Reported
Silver	1. Work began in July 2014 on the <a href="#">Downtown Village Streetscape Improvement Project</a> . 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.	2015

Level	Efficient Transportation Activities	Reported
Gold	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. La Mesa earned the <a href="#">Most Walkable</a> 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</li> <li>2. The city encourages non-automobile transportation such as more sidewalks, bicycle lanes and pedestrian-friendly zones supported by the <a href="#">Sidewalk Master</a> plan and the bicycle facilities and alternative transportation plan.</li> </ol>	2015

Level	Efficient Transportation Activities	Reported
Platinum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 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.</li> <li>2. 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.</li> <li>3. The <a href="#">University Avenue Revitalization Plan</a> is complete which will improve walkability along the major thoroughfare once the project is completed. <a href="#">Allison Avenue</a> 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.</li> </ol>	2015





# Land Use and Community Design Activity

Level	Land Use and Community Activity	Reported
<b>Silver</b>	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.	<b>2015</b>

Level	Land Use and Community Activities	Reported
<b>Gold</b>	1. 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.  2. The general plan Land Use and Urban Design Element encourages use of greenery in design.	<b>2015</b>

Level	Land Use and Community Activities	Reported
<b>Platinum</b>	1. The city has been recognized as a <a href="#">Tree City</a> USA since 1980.	<b>2015</b>





# Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activity

Level	Open Space Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities	Reported
<b>Silver</b>	1. The city has completed the <a href="#">SANDAG Energy Roadmap</a> 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.	<b>2015</b>
Level	Open Space Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities	Reported
<b>Gold</b>	<p>1. 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.</p> <p>2. Funding from an SDG&amp;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.</p>	<b>2015</b>
Level	Open Space Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities	Reported
<b>Platinum</b>	<p>1. The city is working on an <a href="#">updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory</a> 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.</p> <p>2. The city supports walking as a means of offsetting carbon emissions by highlighting walking opportunities on its <a href="#">city website</a>. The webpage details meet ups and non-profit organizations such as; <a href="#">The Art Walk</a>, Walk La Mesa, Walk &amp; Talk La Mesa.</p> <p>3. The city maintains <a href="#">14 parks</a> (approx. 1:4000 residents) and many include native vegetation such as the natural trails at Harry Griffen Regional Park.</p>	<b>2015</b>







# Promoting Community and Individual Action Activity

Level	Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities	Reported
Silver	1. The city had a table at EarthFair 2015 in Balboa Park to promote the climate action plan and other environmental programs such as gray water, composting and homemade cleaning supplies.	2015

Level	Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities	Reported
Gold	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The city is working with the California Center for Sustainable Energy to host home energy upgrade workshops for the public in the <a href="#">summer</a> and <a href="#">winter</a>.</li> <li>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.</li> </ol>	2015

Level	Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities	Reported
Platinum	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Environmental Sustainability Commission's <a href="#">graywater education program</a> will benefit both residents and businesses through brochures and information that are available at city hall and on the city website.</li> <li><a href="#">La Mesa e-Gov</a> 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&amp;E, Helix Water District, EDCO, CalRecycle and the EPA.</li> <li>The helix water district hosted a <a href="#">drought workshop</a> on April 17th 2014.</li> <li>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 <a href="#">Coastal Cleanup Day</a> events.</li> <li>The "Sustain La Mesa" Environmental Festival is held annually in Harry Griffen Park, and includes dozens for 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.</li> </ol>	2015







# INSTITUTE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT<sup>SM</sup>

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