

BEACON



SPOTLIGHT
AWARD

WINNER

BEST PRACTICE
ACTIVITIES



City of Culver City

Sustainability Best Practice Activities



INSTITUTE FOR
LOCAL GOVERNMENTSM

Promoting Good Government at the Local Level

City of Culver City

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			
	Agency Energy Savings		2016 (17%)	2018 (24%)
	Natural Gas Savings			
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities		2017	2018
	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. Since 2013, the City of Culver City has worked closely with the Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) to implement turnkey energy efficiency projects citywide. SoCalREN was created by the CPUC to help public agencies in Southern California implement projects that save energy and money. SoCal REN identifies energy-saving measures and works side by side with city staff from design through construction to help implement energy efficiency projects. The city is provided turnkey solutions and a range of technical services to fit specific project needs.

Gold

2. The city is involved in the Westside Energy Partnership. This partnership includes the city, Southern California Edison, SoCalGas, and the Energy Coalition. Through involvement in the partnership, the city is offered enhanced incentives and rebates on energy efficiency projects, and provided assistance with community outreach to encourage residents to take advantage of utility programs that save money and energy.
3. In 2014, audits were conducted at the city's highest energy using facilities to identify opportunities for energy savings through efficiency and conservation measures. The audits focused on lighting and mechanical components at city hall, police station, senior center, transportation center, and veterans memorial complex. The audits determined that retrofitting facility lighting and HVAC mechanical components, along with implementation of new energy management systems would optimize energy use.

Platinum

4. As a result of the 2014 audits, in 2016 the city completed interior and exterior lighting upgrades to LEDs and optimized the HVAC equipment at all the city facilities included in the audits. The completion of these projects saved 659,190 kWh annually, equivalent to 635,000 lbs. of CO2 emissions annually.
5. Completed in 2018, the city implemented an LED lighting retrofit in the Ince parking structure. This project resulted in 145,648 kWh savings and a rebate of \$33,140. Through this project, the city will save an additional \$21,820 annually.
6. The city recognizes the role energy efficiency plays in achieving the city's sustainability objectives and providing guidance for the future. The city has, therefore, created an Energy Action Plan in 2016 that establishes energy savings goals for its municipal operations.





Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

Silver

1. The city promotes water efficiency to local restaurants. Through the city's website, restaurant owners and managers can find a checklist to become more aware of the importance of implementing water efficiency and conservation within their business.

Gold

2. In recognition of the four-year drought and resulting potable water shortage, the city developed and allocated \$200,000 towards a Water Conservation Plan for FY 2015/16. This plan was created to achieve targeted water reductions in city facilities.
3. A Water Conservation Ordinance adopted by the city that includes different levels of restriction depending on the severity of the drought. A level 1 water shortage is currently in effect, which limits watering to three days a week, prohibits watering within 48 hours of measurable precipitation, and mandates that leaks must be fixed within 72 hours.

Platinum

4. The city has permanent water conservation requirements listed in Chapter 5.03.030 of the city's Municipal Code. Such requirements include, limits on watering hours, watering duration, runoff, and more.
5. Culver City, in partnership with agencies like Metropolitan Water District, West Basin Municipal Water District, Los Angeles County and Golden State Water Company, provides educational workshops and events throughout the year for smart gardening, grey water installation, rain barrel giveaway, turf removal and ocean friendly landscaping.
6. The city completed a water efficient fixtures project that replaced 282 water fixtures at 24 city-owned facilities. This resulted in reducing water use by 35%.





Green Building Activities

Silver

1. The city is in partnership with the County of Los Angeles PACE Program to provide assistance to residents, making energy efficiency, water efficiency, and renewable energy upgrades to their homes more affordable.

Gold

2. The city implements a Green Building Ordinance with the goal of reducing the use of natural resources, creating a healthier living environment and minimizing the negative impact of development on local, regional, and global ecosystems. Furthermore, this ordinance requires all new buildings with 49,999 square feet or less of gross floor area and major renovations to existing buildings of the same size, shall comply with a minimum of 20 items from a list of requirements including, for example, that gas heating shall be a minimum of 90% efficient, and HVAC units shall have a minimum of Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating (SEER) of 17.
3. The city has created GHG technical reports for proposed project sites to assess and discuss the impact of potential GHG emissions that may occur with implementation of the project. Examples of these reports include the proposed projects for the Platform, 8777 Washington Boulevard & The Ivy Station.

Platinum

4. The city's Building and Safety Department provides expedited electronic submittal process for solar photovoltaic installations up to 10 kW in 1-2 family dwellings.
5. In 2016, the city implemented new parkway landscaping regulations that require residential properties to plant drought tolerant and indigenous species in their parkways. The intent of the new regulations is to save water by replacing traditional lawns with native species that require considerably less water to thrive.
6. For major renovations and new development projects that exceed 50,000 sq. ft., the city requires them to be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified. As a result, currently 80 buildings have received LEED certification in Culver City; one of which received an award.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Silver

1. A portion of the city's website is dedicated to Residential Refuse & Recycling Services. This site provides information to educate the community and help meet the city's requirement of State Law (AB 939) to divert 50% of the waste materials generated in Culver City from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling and composting programs.

Gold

2. In an effort to divert household hazardous waste from ending up in a land fill, the city has dedicated a webpage to inform residence about the importance of keeping the environment safe from toxic pollution.
3. The city has successfully implemented waste reduction and recycling programs to adhere to California's waste management regulations and requirements. Since the October 2010 implementation of the Multi-Family Recycling program, the city has seen a 33% increase in annual recycling tonnages. Additionally, the program established outreach programs and the service infrastructure necessary to address high density developments with complex logistical challenges.

Platinum

4. In 2013, after a successful organic pilot program at Sony Pictures Entertainment, the city implemented a Food Waste and Organics Recycling program for all commercial businesses generating food waste. The program created new organics collection routes, educational outreach materials, and workshops dedicated to educating businesses on the California regulations. Since the start of this program in 2013, the city has realized a 17% annual increase in organics waste collection tonnages. The city is currently working on plans to expand the organics waste collection program to residents, thereby diverting more waste from landfills.
5. Culver City has a holiday tree composting program for residents. The city's Fox Hills Park, Syd Kronenthal Park, Culver West Park and Veterans Memorial Park all have bins available until the end of January where trees can be dropped off.
6. Along with providing residents with too toxic to trash events biannually, the city also provides quarterly e-waste and confidential shredding events free of charge to its residents. Drive up, drop off and drive away events allow residents and businesses to dispose of this material confidently while diverting from the landfill.





Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

Silver

1. The city considers green products as its first choice when purchasing its supplies. Over 600 cases of recycled paper are purchased annually. As of 2017, Culver City furthers this mission through participation in the Office Depot Green program, which gives preference to environmentally-friendly, climate-conscious office supplies and goods.

Gold

2. The Ordinance of chapter 11.18 Polystyrene regulations, was added to Title 11, Business Regulations, of the Culver City Municipal Code. The purpose of this chapter is to reduce and prevent presence of this type of litter in the environment and to promote environmentally sustainable practices.
3. The city of initiates a year round farmers market that offers fresh fruits, vegetables, and a selection of other fine foods. When space for vendors becomes available, the city gives consideration to: healthfulness, eco-consciousness; local/nearness of production, and enhancement of market variety. Further supporting the purchase of climate friendly purchasing in the community.

Platinum

4. City has converted its fleet from primarily diesel and gasoline engines to CNG. The city became the first 100% CNG transit fleet in the South Coast Air Quality Management District, and second in California. And more recently has been able to purchase renewable gas for the fleets.
5. The city has established an interdepartmental team to update the city's Purchasing Code as it relates and overlaps with the city's established Environmental Purchasing Policy (EPP). This working team has updated a draft of the EPP, building in procedures to implement the policy city-wide, while monitoring adherence of the policy throughout the procurement process.
6. Sustainability and environmental conditions of approval are built into the Culver City Municipal Code for development projects. The city enforces the 2016 California Building Standards and the 2008 City Mandatory Solar Photovoltaic Requirement for new construction, major renovation, or additions of 10,000 square feet or greater.





Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

Silver

1. In the city's 2016-2017 FY budget, work plans include a solar study to determine the technical and financial feasibility of implementing rooftop and parking facility photovoltaic energy generation systems at various city facilities.

Gold

2. The city further reduces carbon emissions by purchase renewable natural gas. In 2016, the city approved an agreement with Clean Energy Renewable for the purchase and delivery of clean energy redeem 100% renewable natural gas and consulting services for the management of the city's participation in the low carbon fuel standard program for a five-year term.
3. City has converted its fleet from primary diesel and gasoline to CNG. The city has a fleet of more than 500 alternative-fuel vehicles, including 54 CNG buses, 21 heavy-duty CNG refuse trucks, and various other light, medium and heavy-duty vehicles. The city has been recognized for its alternative fuel practices over the years.

Platinum

4. City council joined the Clean Power Alliance of Southern California (CPA). The CPA is the state's largest community choice aggregation organization. The CPA intends to purchase cleaner, more renewable electricity and offer it to their customers at a cost that is less than Southern California Edison. The CPA also intends to develop energy programs to decrease greenhouse gas emissions to reduce the effects of climate change.
5. Through the CPA, Culver City has become one of the few cities in Los Angeles and Ventura County to select 100% renewable power for its entire community. Former SCE customers will be automatically enrolled at the 100% renewable power tier level when service starts in early 2019.
6. In 2016, the city added 3 EV charging stations in its public parking structure downtown and 15 EV charging stations at city hall for public and employee use. The cost to use the EV charging stations by employees is almost entirely subsidized through their receipt of incentives from the city's Emission Reduction Program.





Efficient Transportation Activities

Silver

1. Culver City provides transportation updates to keep residents and commuters informed about traffic advisories and allow them to plan ahead.

Gold

2. The city has a strong partnership with Culver City Unified School District to jointly administer the Culver City Walk & Rollers Safe Routes to School program.
3. The city is currently working with the community to envision and improve Culver City's mobility through the city's Transit Oriented Development Visioning Plan.

Platinum

4. The Culver City Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP) is a comprehensive plan for bicycling and walking and seeks to articulate a new paradigm for transportation planning in the city that embraces the concept of "complete streets." The BPMP also provides a guide for the future development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as education, enforcement, and encouragement programs within the city.
5. The city offers an Emission Reduction program overseen by the Southern California Air Quality Management District to its employees. The rideshare program reduces the number of single-occupant vehicles by providing financial incentives to city employees to bike, walk, carpool, or take public transit.
6. The city's strategic plan goals for 2016-2021 include improving transportation circulation to reduce traffic congestion and work towards no overall growth in average daily traffic citywide. Included is the development of a program to encourage residents to reduce trips by ridesharing and other additional forms of transportation.





Land Use and Community Design Activities

Silver

1. Sustainability and environmental conditions of approval are built into the Culver City Municipal Code for development projects. Some conditions of approval include guidelines on solid waste management, transportation demand and trip reduction measures, low voltage induction streetlight installations along the project frontage, bike lane installations, reasonable efforts to reuse and recycle construction and demolition debris, and development of a Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan.

Gold

2. The city's Art in Public Places program was established by ordinance in 1988, with the view that cultural and artistic resources enhance the quality of life for individuals living and working within a city; and, preserve and improve the quality of urban environment, increase real property values, and have a positive economic impact.
3. The city has a Historic Preservation program that includes a process by which sites can be designated cultural resources at one of three levels based on their architectural, historical, and/or cultural importance.

Platinum

4. Through participation in an interactive workshop, the city council developed a multi-year strategy plan. In the city's Strategic Plan for 2016-2021, the city has outlined the goal of enhancing restoration and utilization of Ballona Creek. This is detailed through a variety of objectives including, making the Ballona Creek more walkable, bikeable, and connected to the city therefore making the creek a recreation attraction.
5. In 2016, the city formed the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to provide input and participate in the planning of the city's bicycle and pedestrian projects. The committee meetings create space and an opportunity for the city to provide updates to the committee and the public on city bicycle and pedestrian projects, while also gathering public input and comments.
6. In 2004, the city council adopted a Neighborhood Traffic Management program (NTMP) to improve livability by reducing speeds, traffic volumes, and improve safety for school access and walking and biking. The NTMP is a participatory and builds in participation with residents and city staff.





Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

Silver

1. The city provides a park profile and locator map on their website. The map makes all Culver City parks easy to locate and provides background information on each, including address and amenities.

Gold

2. The city's Parks & Playgrounds program staff nine parks in the city where recreation leaders provide a friendly and safe environment for park patrons. The city offers free drop-in activities at all staffed parks for all ages. Residents are encouraged to stop by all local parks. Parks & Playgrounds program activities include seasonal sorts, carom games, arts & crafts, group games, and special events.
3. The city operates one community garden with 16 rental plots. These gardens were established to provide a place for the active participation in gardening for residents of the city who would otherwise not have the opportunity.

Platinum

4. Culver City is a Tree City USA. This recognition highlights the city's Urban Forest Master Plan, reflecting the city's commitment to caring for and maintaining a resilient urban forest, and promotes community pride about Culver City and the city's dedication to creating healthy livable environments.
5. In 2015, Culver City created an Urban Forestry Master Plan. The plan articulates a clear vision for the future of Culver City's urban forest based on analysis of the city's historical and existing urban forest, as well as on synthesis of current research, best management practices and community input.
6. In 2013, the city adopted a Tree Care Ordinance, which provides guidelines for tree care. This ordinance, built into the city Municipal Code, provides details on how the city maintains its urban forest and provides procedures for the public to participate in the decision-making process.





Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

Silver

1. Culver City participates in the largest volunteer day on the planet, Coastal Clean Up Day. Each year, the city, along with the help of local volunteers, help clean up the Ballona Creek bike path to demonstrate their commitment to healthy water.

Gold

2. The city informs the public about environmental, community and financial benefits of actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The city also invites Bulbman, the mascot for TECs PEAK Environmental Education program, to attend the event to inform children of the importance of sustainable practices.
3. The Culver City Sustainable Business Certification program promotes actively implementing practices and forming policies that reduce energy and water consumption, pollution, waste diversion, and ensure fair treatment of its employees. It is beneficial to the business residence as well as the community at large by reducing its carbon footprint.

Platinum

4. The city is in the process of preparing to update their General Plan. Through these efforts, the city is involving the community to better understand and include their vision for the city.
5. Culver City's Safe Routes to School Program hosts an annual Walk & Roll Festival. This free festival educates residents on biking in the community safely. Trained instructors guide residents of all ages through a skills course and then put their new knowledge into practice with a group ride. The Culver City bus attends this event as well to demonstrate how easy it is to use public transportation to further reduce traffic.
6. The city has a robust Sustainable Business Certification program that certified 12 businesses in 2017 and is currently accepting application for the 2018 cycle. This is a two tiered program that helps Culver City-based businesses design and operate a certified sustainable business and gain public recognition for their efforts. To receive certification, businesses must complete a variety of environmentally focused activities and support equitable businesses practices for employees. In 2017, businesses collectively saved 10,310 kWh of electricity and 1,598,593 gallons of water.





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