

BEACON

SPOTLIGHT  
AWARD  
WINNER  
BEST PRACTICE  
ACTIVITIES



# City of Menlo Park

Sustainability Best Practice Activities



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



# City of Menlo Park

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

SPOTLIGHT AWARD		SILVER LEVEL	GOLD LEVEL	PLATINUM LEVEL
Areas of Accomplishment				
	Agency GHG Reductions			
	Community GHG Reductions	2015 (6%)		
	Agency Energy Savings			2015 (20%)
	Natural Gas Savings			2015 (27%)
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities		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. Menlo Park markets the statewide Energy Upgrade Program, which provides \$1,000-\$4,000 rebates to residents for making energy-efficient home improvements.

## Gold

2. The city is partnering with San Mateo County and the Energy Watch Program to provide targeted outreach to small businesses regarding free commercial energy audits and rebates available for energy saving retrofits.
3. Menlo Park hosted a Homeowner Workshop in the Belle Haven Neighborhood Community Center in partnership with Energy Upgrade and BayRen.

## Platinum

4. The city retrofitted 476 streetlights with LED lights in February 2012.
5. The city offers a \$300 energy assessment rebate for residents participating in the Energy Upgrade Program. An energy assessment is where an energy auditor conducts an in depth evaluation of a home's energy consumption, checks the operation of its heating and cooling system and determines measures that can be taken to improve efficiency.
6. The city participates in two Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing options: Home Energy Renovation Opportunity (HERO) and California First.





# Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

## Silver

1. The city offers a High-Efficiency Toilet Rebate Program, in which residents and businesses are eligible for a rebate of up to \$100 for purchasing a qualifying high-efficiency toilet.

## Gold

2. The city offers the Lawn Be Gone Program, in which residential and commercial customers are eligible to receive a rebate of up to \$2 per square foot for replacing their lawns with a water-efficient landscape, with no limit on the total amount.
3. The city's newest water conservation program, the Conserve-A-Scape Program is now available. Conserve-A-Scape Program is a landscape assistance program designed to aid residents and participants of Lawn Be Gone with minimal knowledge in landscape design. Residents can apply to receive a professional landscape consultation, design plan, and plant list for \$50.

## Platinum

4. The city offers a free Landscape Analysis Program to commercial and multi-family customers (valued at \$1,400) in which an irrigation expert conducts a landscape irrigation audit and provides a detailed report on how to improve water-efficiency and save on water costs.
5. The city provides free water-use analysis reports, which are distributed on a monthly-basis and provide each irrigation customer with their historical water consumption, recommended water-budget (based on sq. footage of irrigated landscape), and estimates on the amount of money that can be saved with proper watering.
6. The city removed sections of turf to replace it with drought tolerant plants and layers of mulch. Three to four inches of wood chips were added to all city trees planted last year and this mulching is included specifications for all new city planted trees.
7. The city provides free water conservation items to residents, including kitchen aerators, bathroom aerators, low flow shower heads, low-flow hose nozzles, toilet leak detection tablets, and a water-efficient landscaping CD.
8. The city offers a Washing Machine Rebate Program in which residents and businesses are eligible for a rebate of up to \$125 for purchasing a qualifying energy efficient/water efficient washing machine.





# Green Building Activities

## Silver

1. City council adopted the development of a Sustainable Building Program and has since implemented a phased approach. Phase one was implemented in July 2008, making the submittal of the LEED checklist for all new non-residential projects over 10,000 square feet in size a voluntary measure. Phase two expanded the scope of projects to include all mixed-use projects and new residential projects of more than five dwelling units in the voluntary program. Phase three made the submittal of the checklists mandatory as of February 2009 for the types of projects noted above.

## Gold

2. The city has installed a green building interactive display in the building counter lobby.
3. The city is a member of the California First Program and ABAG's Retrofit Bay Area Program. Both programs have successfully competed for grant funding from the California Energy Commission.

## Platinum





# Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

## Silver

1. In 2015, the city adopted the green halo system, used to track construction and demolition projects, estimate debris, and process refunds that meet the city's 60% debris diversion rate.

## Gold

2. The city's current construction and demolition required diversion rate is at 60%, 35% of which can consist of inert waste.
3. The city has implemented a Reusable Bag Ordinance that bans plastic bags and charges a fee paper bags at checkout to encourage customers to reduce waste by bringing their own bag.

## Platinum

4. The city began implementing a Polystyrene Ordinance in 2012, which prohibits food vendors, (including restaurants, delis, cafes, markets, fast-food establishments), vendors at fairs, and food trucks from dispensing prepared food in polystyrene and styrofoam containers.
5. The city offers a free Organics Recycling Program for single-family customers, which allows residents to recycle yard trimmings, food scraps, and contaminated paper in their green cart.
6. The city facility recycling efforts include providing a recycling bin and trash bin in every cubicle and tri-bins (recycling, trash, and compost) provided city-wide with signage and clear labelling made visible.
7. The city offers monthly compost giveaways held at Bedwell Bayfront Park. Menlo Park residents are also welcome to pick up free compost daily and year-round at the Shoreway Environmental Center.
8. The City of Menlo Park provides a door-to-door hazardous waste collection service to Menlo Park residents.
9. The city is a member of the South Bayside Waste Management Authority (SBWMA), also known as RethinkWaste. The Shoreway Center, located in San Carlos is currently constructing improvements to its capacity to handle and sort large volumes of recyclable materials.





# Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

## Silver

1. The city adopted an Environmental Purchasing Policy that was implemented July 1, 2014.

## Gold

2. The city's integrated Pest Management Policy (IPM) has been implemented to reduce purchase and use of toxic pesticides and has resulted in improved practices, noticing, and lower amount of pesticides used in all city facilities, particularly parks and child care facilities. IPM implementation of note includes bringing in goats to remove ivy from city hall and to remove grasses from hillside natural areas.

## Platinum





# Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

## Silver

1. The city plans to install solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on five city facilities in 2015, as a result of actively participating in the Regional Renewable Energy Procurement Project.

## Gold

2. The city eliminated solar permitting fees in 2007.
3. The city established a water waste reporting hotline and sends a uniformed code enforcement officer to investigate and provide water conservation education to reported property owners.

## Platinum

4. The city provides annual funding to Acterra's San Francisquito Creek Watershed Program, a nonprofit organization that helps educate residents to become stewards of the creek through restoration days and litter removal events conducted throughout the year. Every September, the city's environmental programs division coordinates and organizes a Creek Cleanup Day event in the San Francisquito Creek.
5. The city council has adopted a non-binding resolution of support for a San Mateo County community choice aggregation to bring additional renewable power to the community.
6. Approximately 20 electric vehicle (EV) chargers were installed on private property in FY 2014-15, and four public use EV chargers will be installed in public parking lots in Menlo Park in 2015.





# Efficient Transportation Activities

## Silver

1. City employees that choose to take public transit to work currently receive a \$50 subsidy if they purchase a monthly pass from a transit agency.

## Gold

2. City employees will receive \$1.50 per day if they choose to carpool, ride their bicycles, or walk to work. The program is limited to \$30 a month per employee.
3. The city currently manages four shuttle routes: the Mid-day Shuttle, Willow Road Shuttle, Marsh Shuttle, and the Shoppers' Shuttle.

## Platinum

4. The city adopted the Bicycle Development Plan in 2004.
5. The City of Menlo Park recently added shared-lane markings on Menlo Avenue and University Drive adjacent to downtown Menlo Park. The city also added green bicycle lane markings along Willow Road providing a clear East-West cross town route.
6. The city installed a bicycle box on Middlefield Road at Willow Road.
7. The city has adopted the El Camino/Downtown Specific Plan and is spurring transit-oriented development projects in the plan area.
8. The city has received grants to install green bicycle lanes, buffered bicycle lanes, shared-lane markings, close sidewalk gaps, install audible pedestrian signals at traffic signals, and install in-roadway warning lighted crosswalks in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.
9. The Streetline Parker mobile app is available, which provide maps of the city's public parking plazas.





# Land Use and Community Design Activities

## Silver

1. The city's Specific Plan's efforts include improvements to walkability, for buildings to achieve LEED Silver, and for the zoning ordinance amendment to allow higher densities in the R-3 (apartment) zone near downtown.

## Gold

2. The city's Housing Element update added the high density residential R-4-S district (high-density special district) and relaxed the regulations for secondary units.

## Platinum





# Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

## Silver

1. The city adopted a Climate Action Plan in 2009 and in 2011 added a greenhouse gas reduction target of 27% less than 2005 levels.

## Gold

2. The city offers monthly compost giveaways held at Bedwell Bayfront Park. Menlo Park residents are also welcome to pick up free compost daily and year-round at the Shoreway Environmental Center.
3. The City of Menlo Park and the County of San Mateo host bi-annual household hazardous waste drop-off events, free of charge by appointment.

## Platinum

4. The City of Menlo Park and Peninsula Volunteers, Inc. have partnered up to place a pharmaceutical drop box at Little House Activity Center located in Nealon Park. Residents can place any unused or unwanted legal drugs into the receptacle, and they will be properly disposed of.
5. The City of Menlo Park provides a bi-annual shredding and electronic waste recycling events to residents and businesses.
6. Menlo Park is a Tree City USA Growth City, earned by planting more city trees than the city removes.





# Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

## Silver

1. The city of Menlo Park holds a farmers' market every Sunday morning in a parking plaza in the downtown.

## Gold

2. The city provides free reusable bags and "Got Your Bags?" reminder window decals to residents.
3. The city provides free buckets to residents to promote household water conservation.

## Platinum

4. Active community volunteers have started a new non-profit called MenloSpark to make Menlo Park climate neutral. In FY 2014-15 MenloSpark received a significant grant from the Hewlett Foundation to implement its plan and raise additional funds from private donors for local climate action.
5. Menlo Park residents are key organizers in San Mateo Community Choice, an NGO supporting community wide procurement of renewable energy via Community Choice Aggregation.
6. The City of Menlo Park sponsors the Annual Coats for Kids Program, where residents can recycle gently used coats at select city facilities or through the Curbside Recycling Program.
7. The city promotes and participates in the annual "Bike to Work Day" event.
8. The city hosts an annual community tree planting for Arbor Day.
9. The city sponsors local non-profit Acterra to coordinate volunteers to conduct two creek clean up events annually, litter removal as needed, and installation and maintenance of a rain garden on city property.
10. The city council and the environmental quality commission have awarded 49 proclamations to date recognizing individuals' community action benefiting the environment.
11. The city established a water waste hotline and a light duty code enforcement officer has responded with educational materials to 32 reports of water waste.







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