



# Chula Vista: Creating a Cool City

For more information, visit [www.chulavistaca.gov/clean](http://www.chulavistaca.gov/clean) or call 619-409-3893

To improve the health and quality of life of its citizens and visitors, the City of Chula Vista, San Diego County's second largest municipality, has been transforming itself into a "Cool City" for over 20 years by taking cost-effective, common sense steps to reducing its carbon emissions. Through innovative, community-based programs, the City has invested in improving its environmental sustainability, while creating local jobs, building economic vitality, and contributing to the region having one of the highest concentrations of green employers in the nation. Chula Vista was one of the first local governments in the United States to develop a comprehensive climate action plan in the 1990s. The plan, which was updated in 2008, aims to lower energy and water use, expand the installation of solar energy systems, promote alternative fuel vehicles, and design walkable, transit-friendly communities. Below are some of the City's program highlights and major accomplishments:

## PROGRAM HISTORY

- **1990:** Participation in World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future (New York)
- **1993:** Charter member of ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Campaign
- **1996:** Completed Climate Action Plan
- **2005:** Over 40% reduction (vs. 1990 levels) of carbon emissions from city operations
- **2008:** Updated Climate Action Plan
- **2009:** Launched climate "adaptation" planning process

## ENERGY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Energy Strategy & Action Plan** prioritizes efficiency & renewable generation
- **Municipal building policy** requires 20% efficiency over Title-24 & on-site renewable generation
- SDG&E Partnership provides **free energy services to community**
- First jurisdiction in region to adopt citywide **Green Building Standard**
- Voluntary **property-assessed financing program to support retrofits** in community

## RENEWABLE & EFFICIENT ENERGY USE

Energy efficiency, supplemented with renewable energy generation, was prioritized in Chula Vista's *Energy Strategy & Action Plan* and is integrated into numerous City policies and programs. As part of the municipal building policy, all new and renovated City facilities must be designed to exceed State efficiency standards (Title-24) by at least 20% and incorporate on-site renewable energy systems. In the private sector, the *Chula Vista Green Building Standard*, the first citywide standard in the region, requires new residential and commercial buildings to exceed State efficiency standards by 15-20%, while conserving indoor water use and improving indoor environmental quality. In addition, all new residential units must be pre-wired and pre-plumbed for solar photovoltaic and solar hot water systems, respectively, to lower future

installation costs. To target the energy use within existing buildings citywide, Chula Vista is launching its *Home Upgrade, Carbon Downgrade* program to provide streamlined contracting, permitting, and property-assessed financing for efficiency retrofits for interested property-owners. The City also provides free on-site evaluations, technical assistance, and minor retrofits for businesses and residents through a partnership with San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) to further create opportunities to reduce energy and water use and monthly utility costs.

## WATER USE EFFICIENCY

Chula Vista is doing its part to address the resource-intensive process of importing water by working closely with the Otay Water District and Sweetwater Authority to ensure adequate local supplies through conservation, groundwater management, reuse, and proper planning. The City's *Water Conservation Plan Guidelines* help inform how large developments are designed to maximize water use efficiency and to integrate recycled water use, while the *Green Building Standard* targets a 20% reduction in indoor water use at the individual building level. These efforts are complemented by a new landscape water conservation ordinance which established a water budget for outdoor landscape designs within new construction and City-sponsored projects. The City's *NatureScape*

program provides free on-site assistance with outdoor water conservation planning and re-design assistance and has certified over 230 existing properties.

- WATER HIGHLIGHTS**
- **Water Conservation Plan Guidelines** adopted for large developments
  - Green Building Standard requires **20% reduction in indoor water use**
  - Ordinance establishes **water budget for new landscape designs**
  - **Free on-site assistance** to identify outdoor water conservation opportunities

## ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES (AFV)

- AFV HIGHLIGHTS**
- About **25% of City fleet uses alternative** fuel or technology
  - **First transit fleet in region** to be 100% alternative fuel
  - **Bio-diesel fuel** used in all solid waste & recycling **vehicles**

Chula Vista has committed itself to transitioning its over 500 fleet vehicles to cleaner models. With the installation of a new bio-diesel tank, approximately 25% of the fleet will utilize alternative fuels or technology. In addition, the City's major contracted fleets, Chula Vista Transit and Allied Republic Waste Services, have converted 100% of their vehicles operating in the City to an alternative fuel source.

## SMART GROWTH & SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DESIGN

As "smart growth" development is implemented in Chula Vista, new communities are designed to emphasize pedestrian and public transit accessibility. In the City's urban core areas, the City provides developers with incentives to create housing close to community services and transit centers. The City also created the *National Energy Center for Sustainable Communities*, in association with San Diego State University and the Department of Energy, to research and showcase energy efficient and sustainable developments which are both technically and financially feasible. One project example, Los Vecinos, converted an abandoned motel into an affordable housing project and achieved LEED Platinum designation for its sustainable design features.

- SMART GROWTH HIGHLIGHTS**
- **Developer incentives** for smart growth projects
  - **Nat'l Energy Center for Sustainable Communities** created to showcase efficient developments

