

BEACON

SPOTLIGHT
AWARD

WINNER

BEST PRACTICE
ACTIVITIES



City of Thousand Oaks

Sustainability Best Practice Activities



INSTITUTE FOR
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Promoting Good Government at the Local Level

City of Thousand Oaks

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		2016 (17%)	
	Community GHG Reductions			
	Agency Energy Savings	2016 (7%)		
	Natural Gas Savings			
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities			2016
	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 participates in Southern California Edison's Energy Leader Partnership and has attained the Silver Level Tier. The partnership assists with identifying and addressing energy efficiency opportunities in municipal facilities and pays increased incentives for city energy efficiency projects.

Gold

2. The city conducted audits for the agency's top 17 energy using facilities.
3. The city has implemented multiple LED conversion projects at various city facilities, saving approximately 300,000 kWh per year. The LED conversion project replaced 700 high pressure sodium, metal halide fixtures and parking lot lighting throughout the city. Besides high-efficient lighting, other benefits from the conversion project include safety and reducing night-sky intrusion.

Platinum

4. In May 2013, the city received a grant for the installation of a Utility Management and Sub-Metering system (UMS). The UMS is expected to allow staff and residents to see energy usage at select public facilities in real-time. This data will be tremendously useful for identifying high usage occurrences, where additional savings can be realized and benchmarking Energy Action Plan (EAP) progress.
5. In 2012, the city council approved an EAP for city facilities and established an Energy Management Team consisting of a group of staff from various departments. The EAP complements the city's existing environmental programs and policies and provides guidance for further action. The goal of the EAP is to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions at city facilities by 10% by 2017.
6. In 2007, the City of Thousand Oaks switched to a cogeneration heating facility at the Hill Canyon Water Treatment Plant. During each of the three complete years after co-generation was installed, 2008 – 2010, the drop in natural gas use at the facility ranged from 47% to 73%, with an average being 56% annually.





Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

Silver

1. The city participates in the emPower Central Coast Program, which gives away aerators and shower heads, provided by SoCal Gas, at community events. The city also provides free showerheads, faucet aerators and dye tabs to test for toilet leaks at community events and upon request. Additionally, the city works closely with water providers to educate the community and facilitate water conservation measures.

Gold

2. The city installed low-flow plumbing fixtures at the Municipal Service Center (MSC). As a result, the city reduced water use by over 30%.
3. The city promotes local solutions for stormwater management. Landscaped areas at the MSC contain rain gardens and bioswales that were added during the MSC expansion and development of the Household Hazardous Waste Facility, which was completed in spring of 2014. The city is currently preparing a new Landscape Master Plan and updated Forestry Master Plan for city-maintained trees and plantings in the public right-of-way. The overall goal of the project is to incorporate drought-tolerant and water-wise landscaping into public medians and the public right-of-way, while maintaining aesthetic integrity.

Platinum

4. The city's MSC uses catch basin biofilters to further minimize pollution from storm water run-off, the MSC has installed specially designed biofilters in each of its five catch basins.
5. The city's Save Water home page provides an interactive map for public water conservation gardens. The map lists directions for individuals to visit the demonstration gardens, which feature drip irrigation systems, mulching, biochar and drought tolerant flowers, plants, and shrubs.
6. In May 2015, the city council adopted a Drought Action Plan. A Level 2 Water Supply Shortage has also been adopted, along with a series of water conservation measures that impact residents.





Green Building Activities

Silver

1. Since 2014, the city has participated in the emPower Central Coast Program. The emPower Program includes an Energy Coach service where coaches spend up to two hours with a homeowner at their residence providing them with information on green building techniques and recommendations to improve their home's energy efficiency. The emPower Program also works with contractors to provide them with training on green building techniques.

Gold

2. The emPower Central Coast Program has teamed up with the statewide Energy Upgrade California Program to provide homeowners with increased utility rebates for implementing energy efficiency upgrades.
3. The city is a participating member of the Ventura County Regional Energy Alliance (VCREA). VCREA offers utility sponsored quarterly green building standards trainings to staff from member agencies.

Platinum

4. The MSC uses light colored permeable paving to lower the overall site temperature by reflecting solar radiation back into atmosphere and reducing the heat island effect. The permeable paving aids in stormwater management during rain events and allows for infiltration to recharge aquifers.
5. The city utilizes materials with low or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and no added urea-formaldehyde in all interior spaces to promote occupant health.
6. All city-maintained landscaped areas use wood chips as mulch and are watered with direct irrigation, which conserves water by irrigating just where the plant needs. This practice also aids in stormwater management by evapotranspiration of rainwater and reduces the heat island effect.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Silver

1. The city operates a permanent Household Hazardous Waste Facility located in Newbury Park, which opened in 2014. Any resident of Thousand Oaks or unincorporated Ventura County can bring their hazardous waste there, including used electronic goods, CFLs, batteries, paint, used car oil, fluorescent lights and other toxic cleaning materials.

Gold

2. City staff assist local businesses in developing and implementing recycling and diversion programs. The Public Works Department and Waste Management offer free waste assessments to evaluate current service and advise businesses on how to start or improve their recycling program. The city also provides waste reduction and recycling tips on its website.
3. Puncture resistant sharps plastic containers are offered to the public for free upon request to provide for the safe storage, transportation and disposal of sharps from residences.

Platinum

4. The city offers compost bins at a discount to residents as well as free compost workshops once a year.
5. The city provides up to 50 free deskside recycling boxes to Thousand Oaks businesses upon demand. These cardboard containers are used for collecting clean recyclables in an office environment.
6. The city accepts old batteries and compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) by appointment at its Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility. The city also promotes 14 battery drop off locations around the city where batteries can be dropped off.





Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

Silver

1. The city's MSC uses materials with high recycled content to reduce landfills and regional materials to reduce transportation costs and promote the local economy. Sustainably forested wood products are also utilized in the MSC.

Gold

2. The city adopted an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Policy. The EPP policy sets out guiding principles for city purchasers to identify products that are environmentally preferable compared to their conventional counterparts, including products that are durable, reusable or refillable. This includes any equipment that consumes energy.
3. The city considers efficient transportation methods when purchasing goods and services, such as using local vendors and or locally produced goods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Platinum

4. The city encourages the practice of not purchasing new materials, such as office supplies and furniture, through the reuse of existing items in surplus when appropriate and feasible.
5. City departments are encouraged to implement the EPP and review current purchasing practices to identify possible green procurement opportunities.
6. The city has nearly achieved its goal of converting two-thirds of its pool vehicle fleet to alternative fuel vehicles. This number is independent of the city's 19 public transit city buses and vans, which are 100% natural gas powered.





Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

Silver

1. Solar powered lighting has been installed at 13 city bus shelters, including the very first installed solar powered shelter located in front of city hall. These 13 solar powered shelters comprise approximately one-third of the city's total bus shelters.

Gold

2. The city developed renewable energy generation at the Hill Canyon Wastewater Treatment Plant (HCTP) that is 100% onsite self-sufficient. The HCTP has a single-axis 500 kW solar array and 300kW cogeneration units. Any excess energy is fed back into the grid.
3. In 2012, the city installed its first fully-owned solar 300 kW array, located atop the Conejo Recreation & Park District and the National Park Service offices. The system provides over 40% of the facilities' electricity needs.

Platinum

4. The city has 22 electric vehicle charging stations strategically placed at 11 locations around the city. To augment this program, the city's Transportation Center became home to Ventura County's first Level III fast charging station in 2013. Since that time, two more fast charging stations have been placed in the city.
5. The city has installed bicycle racks and other amenities at agency facilities to promote bicycle use by agency employees and visitors.
6. The city has trained agency fleet mechanics to service alternative and fuel efficient vehicles for public transit and paratransit. The city currently owns 11 transit buses, all of which are powered by CNG. The city owns 8 Dial-a-Ride vans, all of which are CNG powered.





Efficient Transportation Activities

Silver

1. The city's Slurry Seal Program uses around 4,300 tons of material, which is composed of 10% recycled tire rubber. Slurry seal protects streets from water penetration and is a quick and economical street repair method.

Gold

2. The city offers online permitting services to reduce the need to travel to the agency offices for minor permits.
3. There are currently 70 miles of bike lanes throughout the city. The city's Bicycle Advisory Team (BAT) has been meeting quarterly for 10 years. They help prioritize bike projects and support staff with bike education. Thousand Oaks consistently ranks in Bicycling Magazine's biennial ranking as Top 50 bicycling cities in the USA.

Platinum

4. The city has consolidated offices that community members often visit at the same time to reduce vehicle miles traveled.
5. For over 40 years, the city has provided public transportation services through a variety of bus services, as well as on-demand transportation services for seniors and those with disabilities, including bus and dial-a-ride services. The city has invested millions into programs and facilities to promote carpooling, to make accessing a bus easier throughout the city, and to make the community a more bike and pedestrian-friendly place to live and work.
6. As a founding member of the East County Transit Alliance, the city is part of a group of agencies working to provide more integrated transportation options to area residents. Additionally, the city is utilizing a Caltrans grant to develop a Transit Master Plan.





Land Use and Community Design Activities

Silver

1. The city participated in SCAG's development of the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), in compliance with SB 375.

Gold

2. As part of the Housing Element Update, the city identified potential infill development sites, and maintains a community-wide database of vacant and underutilized infill sites to monitor the community's growth and change.
3. The city has increased the number of bicycle lanes, lockers, racks, paths and signage throughout the community. In 2010, the city developed a Bicycle Facilities Master Plan that maps out streets, recent improvements, future improvements and bike routes and lanes throughout the city.

Platinum

4. The city has installed neighborhood traffic calming roundabouts to improve livability by reducing speeding and traffic volumes and increase safety for walking and bicycling.
5. The city has reviewed zoning codes and development policies to identify changes that could improve implementation of land use and transportation policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
6. In 2014, the city first offered emPower Central Coast and CaliforniaFIRST Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing programs for residential property owners to install renewable energy systems and/or make energy efficiency upgrades.





Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

Silver

1. There are over 27,000 city maintained trees in Thousand Oaks. The city has implemented the use of drought tolerant and flood resistant landscaping in all city-maintained areas designated for planting.

Gold

2. The city achieved Tree City USA status in 1998.
3. The city is host to a Ventura County Certified Farmers Market on Saturday mornings. The Thousand Oaks Farmers Market runs on Thursday afternoons at the Oaks Mall.

Platinum

4. The city offers the Adopt-an-Oak Program as an innovative way to raise funds for open space maintenance. Oaks can be adopted in honor or memory of a loved one or business associate. The program helps support Thousand Oaks' 15,135 acres of public open space, which comprises 40% of the city.
5. The Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) has been entrusted with the responsibility of preserving, protecting and managing open space resources in the Conejo Valley. COSCA was created in 1977 by a joint powers agreement between the City of Thousand Oaks and the Conejo Recreation and Park District, enabling the two agencies to "jointly exercise their legal powers to create a jurisdictional framework for the conservation of natural open space lands, assure coordination of local land use and resource management decisions and establish an entity to focus community resources toward achievement of adopted General Plan goals."
6. In 1970, the city adopted Ordinance 137-NS: Oak Tree Preservation and Protection. The ordinance is included in Chapter 14 of Title 5. Public Welfare, Morals, and Conduct of the City of Thousand Oaks Municipal Code.





Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

Silver

1. Since 2014, the city has participated in the emPower Central Coast Program, which provides LED lightbulbs, reusable bags, and other give-away items at community events in Thousand Oaks to encourage environmental responsibility. The city has also participated in over six LED Holiday Light Strand Exchange events.

Gold

2. The city's Green Business Certification Program (GBCP) recognizes and rewards small and medium sized Thousand Oaks businesses that demonstrate a substantial and purposeful commitment to environmental stewardship through solid waste reduction, energy and water conservation, environmentally preferable purchasing, air quality improvement and pollution prevention.
3. The city offers a Community Enhancement Grant Program for local non-profits that undertake an environmentally beneficial project, such as tree planting or setting up a recycling program on campus.

Platinum

4. The city provides free trash and recycling bins to residents for a block or neighborhood cleanup event.
5. The City of Thousand Oaks' GoGreen webpage is a portal for the city's environmental programs. The Environmental Programs Unit of the Public Works Department engages residents and businesses regularly through a variety of platforms and events.
6. The city worked closely with Waste Management and the Conejo Valley Unified School District (CVUSD) to implement a district-wide school bottle and can recycling and outreach program in fall of 2012. In total, 27 schools in the district adopted recycling programs with a goal of recycling 80% of bottles and cans on campus.





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