

BEACON

SPOTLIGHT  
AWARD

WINNER

BEST PRACTICE  
ACTIVITIES



# City of Whittier

## Sustainability Best Practice Activities



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







# City of Whittier

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			
	Agency Energy Savings		2016 (12%)	
	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. In 2012, the city replaced two-thirds of the original windows at city hall with dual-glazed windows. The benefits of the new windows include energy conservation and improved comfort for employees and visitors.

## Gold

2. The city replaced boilers in city hall.
3. The lobby lights in city hall were updated to LED.

## Platinum

4. Both the Central Library and the Whittwood Branch Library recently has heating ventilation and air conditioning systems replaced with new, energy-efficiency systems.
5. The city updates all traffic signals to LED signal heads.
6. The city implemented a network virtualization system that decreases the number of physical servers required to run the network, lowering the costa and electrical usage to run the network and cool the server room.





# Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

## Silver

1. The city adopted a Water Efficient Landscaping Ordinance in 2009 to establish provisions for water management practices and water waste prevention. Since the adoption of the ordinance, hundreds of properties have submitted landscape and irrigation plans adhering to the ordinance requirements.

## Gold

2. The city installed native and other low-water plants in many city parks and landscaped areas, including the Whittier Greenway Trail. In addition, a native plants demonstration garden was opened at Laurel Station. These plants can dramatically reduce the use of water save between 20-40% of irrigation costs.
3. The city has converted irrigation systems at most parks and city hall to newer models with smart controllers. The smart systems detect moisture in the ground and deliver irrigation only as needed to sustain plant life. Drip systems deliver the water directly to the plants' roots to avoid evaporation. The system also sends messages when an usually high level of water is recorded to warn of possible leaks in the system.

## Platinum

4. Funded by a state Prop 84 grant, the city constructed the Whittier Greenway Trail Bioswale adjacent to Whittier Boulevard between Mar Vista and Pickering Avenue. The bioswale addresses an existing urban runoff problem into a swale area lined with rocks, gravel and plants to slow the drainage and facilitate its reintroduction into the ground.
5. As a demonstration project, many public buildings have been outfitted with waterless urinals to conserve water.
6. The city uses recycled water to irrigate portions of Founders Park, Guirado Park and Palm Park.





# Green Building Activities

## Silver

1. The city adopted the 2013 Green Building Code as part of the California Building Code to establish environmentally sound design and to address energy sustainability in a number of areas.

## Gold

2. The City of Whittier recently adopted a Low Impact Development Ordinance as part of the Whittier Municipal Code. The ordinance prescribes green practices for new construction, with an emphasis those that reduce the amount of pollutants that are carried by storm water to creeks, rivers and the ocean.
3. The city dictates that all new construction must reduce the overall use of potable water within a building by 20% and comply with statewide goals for water conservation.

## Platinum

4. The city passed a new code establishing new fireplace emissions standards to prevent any unused fuel from escaping the sealed fireplace to maintain indoor air quality and increase energy efficiency.
5. The city passed a new code to set limits on volatile organic compounds (VOCs) of finish materials commonly installed in construction projects, which will help to improve air quality for building occupants.
6. The city requires that newly constructed projects must reduce the amount of light and glare from both interior and exterior light sources, leaving the site. These standards will minimize light pollution and maintain dark skies.





# Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

## Silver

1. The city makes available personal and community recycling containers to encourage recycling and waste reduction. As a result, hundreds of city workers and community members regularly recycle paper products, beverage containers, which has substantially reduced the amount of solid waste going to the landfill.

## Gold

2. All residential buildings up to fourplexes are provided blue containers for mixed recycling automated collection and green containers for green waste automated collection. Since the program was put into place, the city's total waste diversion increased to 65%.
3. In 2013, the city implemented a commercial and multifamily recycling program. Apartment complexes with more than four units and businesses now have the same opportunity to subscribe to recycling services.

## Platinum

4. The city has used rubberized asphalt street resurfacing in some street resurfacing projects. This material is made from crumb rubber and recycled tires which would have otherwise been disposed of in the landfill. Public Works most recently completed a project on Janine Drive.
5. Whittier owns and operates its own landfill in the center of the city. The location substantially reduces the traffic and air quality impacts of transporting solid waste.
6. The city has a Construction and Demolition Policy dictating that half of all construction and demolition waste must be recycled to reduce the amount of waste generated, thereby extending the life of the landfills. This also encourages material resource efficiency through reuse of construction waste products.







# Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

## Silver

1. Some of city's newer and recently remodeled buildings were equipped with paperless hand dryers that reduce solid waste and energy consumption.

## Gold

2. The city purchased electric and hybrid vehicles instead of conventional gas vehicles for the city fleet.
3. The city purchased 60 virtual desk top machines for the central library and Whittwood Branch, which cost less and use less electricity. Virtual PCs have fewer parts and a longer life span than traditional computers. They are also more environmentally-friendly to recycle.

## Platinum





# Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

## Silver

1. The city's Savage Canyon Landfill captures methane gas from the decomposing waste. The gas is pumped through underground pipelines to PHI Health for its energy use. The gas is used to operate engine generators to create electricity for the hospital campus. This project saves thousands of dollars in hospital power bills and serves as an alternative energy use.

## Gold

2. Whittier was one of the first cities in California to be converting its fleet to clean burning compressed natural gas (CNG) instead of gasoline diesel. Now, virtually the entire fleet of city garbage trucks is comprised on CNG trucks. In addition, the city has CNG fueled lift trucks, sewer maintenance trucks, transit buses and street sweeping vehicles.
3. The city constructed a CNG filling station at the city yard to serve its growing fleet of CNG vehicles and equipment.

## Platinum

4. The city received a federal grant to improve bus stops and shelters. As part of the project, bus stop lights and poles were converted to solar energy.





# Efficient Transportation Activities

## Silver

1. The City of Whittier completed a Bicycle Transportation Plan. The plan provides guidance for incorporating bicycle facilities into maintenance and development projects. The city has been very aggressive about competing for grant funding to provide new and improved bicycle facilities. One of the city's most impressive projects is the Whittier Greenway Trail, which opened in 2009 on the old railroad right-of-way.

## Gold

2. City employees are encouraged to rideshare in a number of ways. An annual commuter survey tracks commuting patterns and offers employees the option of being linked with other employees who live nearby, city employees who rideshare qualify for reserved preferential carpool parking at city hall and receive other incentives.
3. The city provides Whittier residents with a discount for Metro's monthly bus passes.

## Platinum

4. The city hosts an annual Bike to Work Day event on the Greenway Trail near Palm Park, encouraging employees and residents to try to bike to work and take advantage on this community resource.
5. The city updated bicycle parking requirements to ensure the newly constructed projects provide short and long term accommodations for bikes.
6. The city updated parking requirements to promote the use of clean air vehicles. Parking is reserved for alternative fuels, flexible fuels and other fuel efficient vehicles in an effort to conserve natural resources and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.





# Land Use and Community Design Activities

## Silver

1. In 2013, Whittier adopted a Green Streets Policy and Green Guidance Manual, which provide a policy of design and street improvement projects to encourage the reduction of polluted surface water runoff.

## Gold

2. The city adopted the Uptown Whittier Specific Plan to guide development within the uptown area. The plan provides for mixed use development in a way that allows residents to live, work and play in one area.
3. The city council adopted the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan to encourage mixed use development patterns in an effort to eliminate the need to drive.

## Platinum





# Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

## Silver

1. The city has implemented online payments and permit renewals for business licenses, utility payments and recreation class registration and payments. By allowing the public to conduct these transactions online, the city reduces the need for citizens to travel to city hall, thus saving energy, improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

## Gold

## Platinum





# Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

## Silver

1. The city provides live streaming video of city council and planning commission meetings online in addition to the longstanding meeting videos on city Channel 3. Residents who may not have access to cable television can view meetings live and in the video archives on the website to members of the public can more easily learn about decisions affecting the community.

## Gold

## Platinum







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1400 K Street, Suite 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916-658-8208  
[www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org)

