

BEACON
SPOTLIGHT
AWARD
WINNER
BEST PRACTICE
ACTIVITIES



City of Gonzales

Sustainability Best Practice Activities

City of Gonzales

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		2017 (13%)	
	Agency Energy Savings	2017 (5%)		
	Natural Gas Savings	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Sustainability Best Practice Activities			2017
	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. Completed AMBAG Energy Watch audit and retrofit of community pool, city hall, and fire department building.

Gold

2. Worked with Ecology Action to access technical assistance and financial incentives such as facility audits, rebates, on-bill financing, loans, savings by design and demand management programs.
3. Participated in the PG&E Climate Smart program to track and share agency energy savings accomplishments.

Platinum

4. Implemented off-peak scheduling of municipal water well pumps.
5. Installed time of day SCADA software to water well pumping systems to maximize energy savings by pumping from wells during off-peak hours.
6. Installed motion sensors and multi-level switches to control room lighting systems at city hall, police department, and fire department.
7. Replaced incandescent lights with more energy efficient lighting such as compact fluorescents, overhead fluorescent lights or LEDs at all public buildings.
8. Increased energy efficiency by consolidating three city data servers into one central server.
9. Installed smart meters on all city buildings.
10. Converted all downtown and city park holiday and festival decorative lighting to light-emitting diodes (LEDs) including solar versions.
11. Installed energy management software to monitor real-time energy use in agency buildings to identify energy usage patterns and abnormalities, benchmark energy use of the city's public works building.
12. Replaced all mercury vapor street, parking lot, park and other outdoor lights with energy efficient light-emitting diodes.





Energy Efficiency and Conservation Activities

Platinum

13. Set city computer to go into a low-power, screen saver mode when not actively in use. All employees are encouraged to turn off the computers at their work stations at the end of their work day.
14. Through Ecology Action, supported Right Lights program, facilitated many business outreach efforts to encourage community businesses to conduct energy audits and implement energy efficiency retrofits through door to door visits with the Ecology Action representative.
15. The sustainability initiative project manager developed and regularly distributes a bilingual “Earth Day Every Day” 10-point outreach document for residents that highlights energy savings by turning off electric appliances when not in use along with an argument in favor of using rechargeable household batteries.
16. Mails an annual bi-lingual holiday utility insert that informs residents of ways that they can save energy during the months when holiday decorations are popular. This includes the use of LED and solar holiday lighting, placing lighting on timers, the use of non-illuminated holiday decorations, and setting water heaters on “vacation mode” when traveling.
17. Worked with Central Coast Energy Services (CCES) to do continual advertisement and outreach in the community for the no-cost energy efficiency upgrades provided to qualified low-income and senior citizen residents.





Water & Wastewater Systems Activities

Silver

1. Conducted a water pumping system audit that identified most and least efficient equipment. The audit resulted in the city shutting down its least efficient well in 2016.

Gold

2. Conducts annual water loss program “leak audit” of all city water infrastructure.
3. Conducts regular assessment, maintenance and repair of city irrigation systems, parking lot landscaping, public restrooms, parks and other recreation facilities.

Platinum

4. Installed 1,875 RFID meters on all residential and commercial water meters. This has reduced monthly read drive time from 1.5 days to 2 hours per month.
5. In 2015, the city worked with Constellation Wines (a local winemaking facility) and Salinas Valley Recycles to create a partnership that substitutes reclaimed winery wash-down water for municipal water used for dust control at the regional landfill outside of Gonzales. The reporting FY 2016 shows 592,850 gallons of reclaimed water used.
6. Annual presentations to community groups on water conservation, providing in-tank water displacement bladders, leak testing tablets and hose nozzles with shutoff handles.
7. In 2015, the city adopted an ordinance to limit watering for all residents and businesses to two days per week.
8. Installed laminated bilingual signs in public and private restrooms in city facilities reminding residents and staff that water conservation is a concern even in years where drought is not present.
9. As part of the city’s storm water management plan, the city maintains a contract for educational outreach with the non-profit education group “Save the Whales.”
10. Sustainability initiative staff coordinates annual Earth Day and fall litter abatement activities with local volunteers. The result is anywhere from 500 to 1,000 pounds of micro-trash and illegally dumped items such as tires, furniture, and used motor oil.





Green Building Activities

Silver

1. Adopted through city code sustainable landscaping standards for public agency facilities to reduce water consumption.

Gold

2. Adopted a "Solar Ready" ordinance, requiring all new agency and residential buildings to be pre-wired and pre-plumbed for photovoltaic and solar hot water systems.
3. Enacted a construction and demolition debris recycling ordinance and monitoring program that requires 50 percent or more diversion of project waste.

Platinum

4. Tinted windows at city hall and police department to reduce heating by sunlight.
5. Joined Western Riverside Council of Governments and the California First Coalition, which allows our businesses and homeowners to finance energy upgrades paid for through the HERO program (a PACE program).
6. The city has adopted a policy that requires new homes, buildings or remodels to exceed the minimum requirements of CalGreen. Options to exceed the standard include CalGreen's built-in tiers and/or certification under Build It Green's Green Point Rated system, LEED®, or alternative certification program. The city requires new residential and commercial construction buildings to exceed Title 24 energy efficiency standards, to extent permitted by law.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Silver

1. Default setting for all city copy machines is “two-sided”.

Gold

2. Regular city staff education on reducing consumption in the workplace. Staff is encouraged to share digital rather than print paper copies of documents.
3. Documents and records are scanned and stored in a digital database.

Platinum

4. G3 staff works regularly with city staff to solicit their ideas for innovations that reduce consumption of materials.
5. City staff use the second side of printing mistakes and no longer needed printed papers for telephone message and note pads at city offices.
6. The sustainability initiative project manager reports annually to the Gonzales City Council on the outreach, project, and program activities of the sustainability initiative. This is coordinated with the annual waste hauler review. The reporting includes a snapshot of both recycling and disposal tonnages from the residential and commercial/business sectors of the community along with an assessment on whether the community is meeting its minimum requirements for diversion under state law.
7. The city shares “reduce, reuse, recycle” messages with the community on a weekly basis through a 15-unit digital kiosk system (KICK kiosk) and a weekly community email with 100+ community subscribers.
8. The sustainability program coordinator regularly provides RRR outreach at community events, special meetings (Rotary, American Legion, etc.), and in classrooms by invitation.
9. The city has an ongoing program to promote a special events culture that has most fundraisers throughout the community printing “bring your own containers” for take-out on their meal tickets. City staff has done extensive outreach with local service clubs and organizations promoting the city’s “Green up your Fundraiser” outreach materials.
10. In 2014, the city council adopted a single use, ultra-thin plastic bag ban and polystyrene to-go container ban. Paper bags or heavy gauge reusable plastic bags are charged at a rate of \$0.25 each.





Waste Reduction and Recycling Activities

Platinum

11. The city allows an annual community-wide garage sale in which residents are not required to secure a garage sale permit. This sale does not count against the 2 sale per year limit. The event is scheduled two weeks prior to the “Reuse, Recycle & Cleanup Days” event so that items not sold at the sale can be donated to charity groups for reuse.
12. The city hosts two annual “Reuse, Recycle & Cleanup Days” events where residents can bring items for source separation by youth volunteers (including trash). These events are free and contain a “take it or leave it” area to promote reuse.
13. Residential mixed recycling and yard waste recycling containers are provided as part of trash collection service at no additional charge.
14. In 2016, the contract waste hauler introduced a reduced rate, 32-gallon trash container service to further financially incentivize residential recycling.
15. Conducts recycling program outreach through public events, mailers, digital media, social media, annual information mailers, school visits, annual teacher notices, utility mailers, business visits and free waste audits.
16. Over the past three years, Public Works has installed grant funded trash and recycling kiosks designed to support recycling of CRV materials in public places where single use beverages are either sold or brought to the sites for consumption during sporting and physical activity. These kiosks hold the regular curbside collection containers for trash and recycling provided by the contract waste hauler. They can be placed curbside by public works staff for easy weekly collection on the residential truck route.
17. The City of Gonzales was the recipient of the 2013 Governor’s Environmental and Economic Leadership Award in the category of Children’s Education for their summer day camp curriculum “Environmental Leadership Academy.” Components of the curriculum continue to be used in classrooms at all grade levels and in the city’s recreation department’s summer day camp program.
18. The city hosts summer education programs such as “Fun in the Garden” and the “Cooking Academy”, which promote home composting and vermicomposting as part of the curriculum.
19. All schools within the district have a fully integrated recycling infrastructure and management plan developed by the sustainability initiative project manager.
20. The Gonzales Police Department hosts a twice annual DEA sponsored drug take back event open to the entire Salinas Valley.





Climate-friendly Purchasing Activities

Silver

1. Through a grant award, the public works department procured 529,200 pounds of California recycled materials, which diverted and recycled approximately 44,100 tires. The material was used in city parks and parkways as ground cover.

Gold

2. Once per year, the city purchases a pallet of 30% recycled content office paper through a DGS supplier contract.
3. All public meeting documents are shared with city and elected officials in a digital format and are available for their viewing during meetings on notebook devices purchased in 2015.

Platinum

4. City sustainability and public works staff meet annually with the CalRecycle representative to review climate friendly purchasing options and opportunities.
5. City staff is regularly reminded with an outreach flyer and personal contact by the sustainability initiative project manager to actively pursue climate-friendly purchasing choices for office supplies and materials.
6. The city purchased and maintains a supply of reusable kitchen and dining supplies for daily use, staff events, and shared meals.
7. Purchased tablets for city and elected officials to view all public meeting documents in electronic form rather than having to print agendas on paper.
8. The city has made a conscious effort to purchase alternative fuel vehicles as part of its fleet.





Renewable Energy and Low-Carbon Fuels Activities

Silver

1. Eliminated the need for a permit for installing home or business electric vehicle charging stations.

Gold

2. Solar & Wind Infrastructure projects: corporation yard solar array 53.04 kW, Police Dept. solar array 51.00 kW, swimming pool solar array 16.32 kW, well #6 solar array 77.52 kW, city/winery rooftop solar array 252 kW, and waste water treatment plant solar array 340 kW.
3. The city negotiated a partnership with a land owner in our commercial industrial business park to purchase and create two city-owned landing pads for wind turbines. One 1 MW turbine installed in 2015 for Taylor Farms by Pacific Wind Power. The City of Gonzales underwrote all costs for environmental studies. This included working closely with the Ventana Wilderness Society to ensure protections for migratory birds.

Platinum

4. Installed a solar-powered pedestrian activated LED crosswalk in front of Gonzales High School.
5. All illuminated flashing STOP signs are solar powered.
6. Used a regional purchasing option or the California Department of General Services bulk purchasing program to buy a green fleet vehicle (Nissan Leaf) from a local auto dealer.
7. Adopted an “over the counter” building permit policy for streamlined permitting, to encourage installation of photovoltaic systems on new or existing residential and commercial buildings.
8. Permitting standards for installation of electric vehicle charging stations at residential and commercial buildings are part of city code.
9. Eliminated the need for a permit for installing home or business electric vehicle charging stations.





Efficient Transportation Activities

Silver

1. Works collaboratively with AMBAG and TAMC to plan, develop and fund transportation and circulation facilities.

Gold

2. Evaluating use of roundabouts at Hwy 101 and Fifth Street and Herold Parkway at Fifth streets to improve traffic flow and idling.
3. Incorporated bike lanes on Belden Street during Alta Street resurfacing project.

Platinum

4. Provides real-time bus arrival and departure information to riders through text and/or application services.
5. Routinely assess and adjust bus schedules to maximize ridership opportunities for residents on Route 23.
6. Provided cell phones to staff and service crews to improve efficiency of routes and information sharing.





Land Use and Community Design Activities

Silver

1. In 2010, the City of Gonzales adopted a comprehensive General Plan update that focuses substantial future urban development to the east of Highway 101, thereby enabling preservation of the majority of the most productive agricultural soils near the city.

Gold

2. In 2014, the City of Gonzales and the County of Monterey developed An MOU regarding the cooperation on planning, growth and development issues. This plan is aimed at reducing costs for affordable housing and provide protection for of valuable agricultural plans.
3. In 2015, the city adopted a Comprehensive Plan to serve as the city's blueprint for long-term development. Once adopted, the plan will be used to guide city development decisions. In addition, the planning and zoning commission and city council shall consider the adopted plan before adopting or approving local laws, ordinances or regulations, as required by state law. The comprehensive plan is based on guiding principles that reflect citizens' core values. These principles were created through citizen input that informed the actions recommended in this plan.

Platinum

4. Conducted an inventory of potential infill development sites and maintain a current database.
5. Provide expedited application processing for development projects that meet or exceed sustainable land use policies.
6. The Gonzales Commercial/Industrial Business Park is conveniently looped through Business 101, which offers convenient progress and egress from and to a major California shipping lane, Highway 101. It is also conveniently located adjacent to railroad lines if, in the future, commercial businesses decide to partner to develop a rail spur to service rail shipments to and from their manufacturing sites.





Open Space and Offsetting Carbon Emission Activities

Silver

1. Adopted a tree ordinance to protect urban forests, including protection for specific individual trees or tree species important to the community.

Gold

2. Planted native trees and drought tolerant vegetation throughout the community.
3. The City of Gonzales requires a written waste management and recycling plan as part of all public events. All public spaces and public buildings have special containers designated for recycling.

Platinum

4. In 2012 and 2013, city staff worked with a certified farmer's market to host a weekly market focused on fresh produce. The market enabled the use of SNAP benefits to help provide healthy, local foods to lower income residents.
5. In partnership with AMBAG, conducted a greenhouse gas inventory to identify emission sources.
6. In 2016, the city council also adopted revisions to the city's General Plan Land Use, Circulation and Conservation and Open Space elements as a means of implementing specific planning actions described in the MOU between the City of Gonzales and Monterey County regarding orderly growth and development.





Promoting Community and Individual Action Activities

Silver

1. In 2009, the City of Gonzales established the “Gonzales Grows Green” (G3) community sustainability initiative to address issues and establish programs and projects that promoted environmental conservation and education, economic development, and social equity within the community. An additional goal of the program was to establish Gonzales as a regional leader in these areas.

Gold

2. Residents, businesses, and city staff are kept informed through a community information kiosk system known as KICK kiosk. The kiosk information outreach system includes a network of six stationary kiosks placed at various locations throughout the community such as the public library, community bank, pharmacy, and all public waiting areas in city buildings.
3. All outreach materials are photo-intensive and produced in both Spanish and English.

Platinum

4. A portion of the city’s state CRV rebate funds are spend through with a local media coalition to addresses illegal dumping, water conservation, water pollution, and the messages of RRR. These messages are placed with local television, print, digital, and radio media outlets in both English and Spanish.
5. Residents also receive regular notices of important things to remember in these areas through utility inserts and billing overlays.
6. In 2015, the city partnered with the school district to launch the Gonzales Youth 21st Century Success Initiative (GY21CSI). This initiative formed the Gonzales Youth Council (GYC), which is comprised of community youth representatives grades 5-12. The GYC selects two representatives annually to represent the voice of youth in the community in advisory positions to the city council and the school district’s board of trustees. These leaders participate in a paid summer internship with the city.
7. The sustainability project manager hosts environmentally themed table-top displays at public events or recruits local agencies to do educational outreach.
8. Since 2009, the city and its partners have given away thousands of recycled content reusable grocery and recycling collection bags at grocery stores, public events, public presentations, and door-to-door outreach events.





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