



City of Sandy Springs

Leading the Way to Sustainability

In 2018, the City of Sandy Springs achieved the Silver level certification under the Atlanta Regional Commission's Green Communities Program. This recertification advances the city from the Bronze level certification it received in 2014. The city has implemented — and received points for — the following measures that reduce its environmental impact and promote sustainability.

Green Building

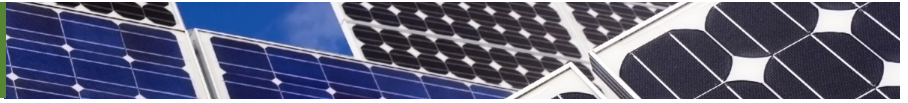
- » Adopted a Green Community Incentive Policy that reduces/waives permitting fees by up to half for projects seeking Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), EarthCraft, or ENERGY STAR certification.
- » Adopted a Green Community Incentive Policy that reduces/waives permitting fees by up to half for projects dedicating residential units to workforce housing and also seeking LEED, EarthCraft, or ENERGY STAR certification.

Energy Efficiency

- » Performed energy audits on all city-owned facilities, as well as on leased facilities, which it's working with landlords to retrofit. Plans to conduct energy audits every four years as technologies improve.
- » Joined the ENERGY STAR partnership in 2014. Measures and tracks energy usage within its facilities through energy audits.
- » Adopted a policy to purchase ENERGY STAR rated equipment and appliances for city facilities.
- » Retrofitted all its traffic signals and pedestrian signal heads with energy-saving LED signal inserts.
- » Adopted a lights-out/power-down policy, requiring employees and maintenance staff to turn off lights and all other non-essential electronic equipment when not in use.
- » Installed ENERGY STAR rated cool roofs on the city hall, police, and Trowbridge warehouse buildings. Visitors to city hall are educated about its cool roof via reception area signage.

- » Uses energy-saving LED fixtures. Replaced 42 fluorescent light fixtures with high-bay T5 lighting fixtures at its Trowbridge warehouse. Projections for the retrofit project indicate a savings of one-third the energy normally used annually. The newly-constructed City Hall building and Performing Arts Center use LED bulbs in all their light fixtures.
- » Adopted a site lighting ordinance to reduce glare in the night sky in two ways: by regulating light levels at property lines, and by regulating construction material choice in order to minimize off-site light spill.

Green Power



- » Harnesses solar energy from two city fire stations and uses it to heat water. As a result, the stations' natural gas usage has decreased by 27 percent, resulting in \$23,158 in cost savings over the first two years.
- » Adopted a Green Community Incentive Policy that reduces/waives permitting fees by up to half for projects incorporating solar power into site design.

Water Efficiency



- » Conducted water audits on all city-owned facilities. Performed audits on leased facilities and is working with landlords to retrofit. Plans to conduct water audits every four years as technologies improve.
- » Captures rainwater in a 9,200-gallon cistern at Hammond Park to irrigate plants as well as supply extra water for other city watering needs.
- » Built Marsh Creek Stormwater Park to handle stormwater runoff from the new City Springs site, and to accommodate future redevelopment around City Springs. As the area undergoes further changes, new developers can buy stormwater credits through the park rather than build their own stormwater infrastructure.
- » Completed an audit with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division and is in compliance with the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's Water Resource Management Plan.
- » Adopted a Green Community Incentive Policy that reduces/waives permitting fees by up to half for residences seeking WaterSense Certification.

Trees & Greenspace



- » Adopted the Next Ten Comprehensive Plan, which includes a detailed Greenspace, Natural Systems, and Sustainability section that makes recommendations for improvements to the current greenspace inventory. Recommendations include identifying existing pedestrian connections to current greenspaces and potential expansion opportunities for trails, footbridges, and other recreation activities.

- » Built an underground parking deck that is topped with a green roof. The new green space is used for public concerts, festivals, and recreation at the City Springs complex.
- » Designated as a Tree City USA Community for the past nine years. To maintain this designation, the city has a tree commission, a community tree ordinance, a community forestry program with an annual budget of at least \$2 per capita, and an annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation.
- » Donated space and built 60 raised beds for community gardeners at Lost Corner Preserve. The city also installed a deer fence and supplies water for garden use.
- » Provides the location, parking, and publicity assistance for the Heritage Sandy Springs Farmers Market, held Saturday mornings from April through October.

Transportation & Air Quality



- » Offers employees a commute-options program that includes \$50 per month towards transit or vanpool passes for employees who utilize these services at least three days a week, bicycle parking at City Springs, preferred parking for carpools/vanpools, and a commuting awards and recognition program
- » Gives preference to purchasing fuel-efficient and lowest emission vehicles, including but not limited to alternative fueled and hybrid vehicles via its Green Fleet policy. Currently, Sandy Springs' fleet includes 54 hybrid vehicles that use both propane and gasoline.
- » Adopted an anti-idling policy to prevent city vehicles from idling for more than 30 seconds unless in traffic or on routine stops.
- » Converted 54 fleet vehicles to propane autogas, saving over \$7,000 in vehicle operation costs over traditional gasoline vehicles in 2017 alone.
- » Built a 2,000-gallon propane autogas fueling station for the city fleet at Hammond Park and EV charging stations at City Springs, Hammond Park, and the public works facility.
- » Developed an Intelligent Transportation System Plan in 2007 to direct implementation of signals, fiber optic cable, and communication devices to improve overall transportation system management. All major traffic signal corridors within the city and the Perimeter Community Improvement District have active fiber and communication devices. On State Route 9 alone, travel time has decreased by over 25 percent.
- » Promotes and enhances alternative mode routes, access, and safety around public and private schools in support of the Safe Routes to School program. A major focus is the city's sidewalk capital improvement program, which has completed five sidewalk connections to schools since 2014. School zones and beacons and radar speed feedback signs enhance traffic safety around public schools. The city also partners with schools to celebrate Georgia Walk/Bike-to-School day.
- » Initiated the development of a citywide Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trail Plan in fall 2013. The city's bike and pedestrian policies are also guided by its Transportation Master Plan and Sidewalk Improvement Program. The city has invested over \$8 million in the last five years to build new sidewalks. It also recently opened the Abernathy Greenway multiuse trail.

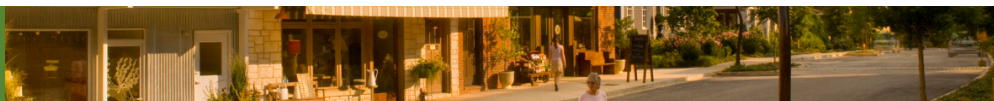
- » Encourages shared parking where principal uses will not utilize space during the same hours. Allows for a parking reduction in areas near MARTA stations. Sets a parking maximum for the Perimeter Center and City Springs districts to encourage better walkability.
- » Adopted a new development code in 2017 that requires all new developments to install electric vehicle charging stations. In the Perimeter Center and City Springs districts, and in any parking structure constructed in any other district, five percent of all parking spaces must be electric-vehicle (EV) ready, with a minimum of two EV-ready spaces for all parking lots with more than 20 spaces. In addition, the city has installed three public EV charging stations in its underground parking deck and at Hammond Park.

Recycling & Waste Reduction



- » Adopted a purchasing policy that encourages the procurement of environmentally-preferable products and services.
- » Provides locations throughout City Hall for employees and visitors to recycle office paper, cans, plastic bottles, cardboard, and pens.
- » Collects electronics, batteries, and printer cartridges from employees for recycling.
- » Requires the purchase of copy, computer, and fax paper with at least thirty-percent recycled content whenever the use of the paper makes it possible to do so.
- » Contracts with Keep North Fulton Beautiful to run the Sandy Springs Recycling Center. Residents may recycle electronics, cell phones, batteries, appliances, and other items.
- » Offers glass recycling at the Sandy Springs Recycling Center. Since 2014, the center has recycled over 1.4 million pounds of glass.
- » Holds an annual household hazardous waste collection day for residents to properly dispose of items like paints, solvents, stains, cleaning products, pool and spa chemicals, and pesticides.

Land Use



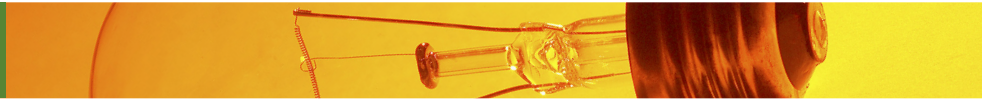
- » Transformed a city block from a single-story strip mall and parking lot into a multi-use city center with housing, civic services, an entertainment venue, restaurants, an underground smart-parking deck, and more.
- » Encourages smart growth development via the Sandy Springs Town Center Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) plan, Roswell Road Corridor LCI plan, and multiple Small Area Plans adopted in 2017 as complements to the new comprehensive plan.
- » Incentivizes redevelopment via an Opportunity Zone program focused on the area around I-285 at Roswell Road. Businesses locating within the area are eligible to apply for a tax credit of \$3,500 per net new job created against the company's state income tax liability.

Education



- » Provides educational information to employees on the city's sustainability efforts through a lunch-and-learn that highlights the city's efforts across multiple categories.

Innovation



- » Constructed a “smart” parking deck at its City Springs development. Parking sensors and a ceiling lighting system allow for cars entering the deck to finding parking spaces. Green lights indicate available spots, blue lights indicate available electric vehicle charging spots, and red lights indicate unavailable spots. This system decreases emissions by decreasing the time drivers spend searching for parking.
- » Partnered with Trees Atlanta to establish and manage the NeighborWoods program, providing free shade trees to residents to plant on private property. The city also partnered with Trees Atlanta on the Johnson Ferry reforestation project. A total of 125 native trees were planted by over 100 volunteers.
- » Switched to multiple paperless services, including the Build Sandy Springs Portal for electronic review of plan submissions from developers, Bonfire for bid proposal package submission, and DocuSign for internal signature approval processes. By going digital on multiple paper services and processes, the city cuts down on paper use and expenditures immensely, while also decreasing the time it takes for approvals.
- » Purchased approximately four acres of privately-owned land in a floodplain and converted it into a park complete with a pedestrian bridge and trails. Since funding for the purchase came from the Georgia Emergency Management Agency flood hazard mitigation grant program, the park acts as a stormwater overflow site in times of heavy rainfall.

For more information on all the certified communities, visit the Green Communities webpage at <http://atlantaregional.org/greencommunities>.