Leading the Way to Sustainability

In 2009, the City of Roswell was one of the first communities to be certified “Green” under the Atlanta Regional Commission’s Green Communities Program. The city reaffirmed its commitment to being green in 2013, when it recertified as a Green Community at the Gold level. The following measures have been implemented by the City of Roswell to reduce its environmental impact and promote sustainability. These measures received points for certification.

Green Building

» Requires all new city-owned buildings greater than 5,000 square feet to be LEED certified.

» Requires all new city-owned buildings to achieve Energy Star certification.

» Requires all local government building renovations to be Energy Star certified and follow LEED guidelines.

» Roswell Build Green Incentive Program provides incentives for community green building, affordable/workforce housing green building, WaterSense and solar installation in one comprehensive resolution. Incentives are not only permit/fee related, but also seek to help market projects via a signage, website and an awards program.

Energy Efficiency

» Became an Energy Star partner in February 2009 and developed an Energy Strategy for the Future that states the city’s fundamental commitment to protect the environment through the continuous improvement of its energy performance.

» Energy Star purchasing policy to purchase energy-efficient equipment and appliances. In FY 2012, the city purchased one Energy Star refrigerator and leased 400 Energy Star desktop computers/monitors, resulting in more than $8,000 in energy savings.

» Retrofitted and/or installed 102 LED traffic signals and 37 School Zone lights, which has resulted in an estimated annual energy savings of more than $60,000.
Adopted a lights out and power down policy requiring employees to turn off lights and all other equipment when leaving an area and all electrical and electronic devices when not in use. Through energy efficiency measures, including its Lights Out, Power Down Policy, the city has decreased its energy usage by approximately 40,000 kWh/year over the time period between January 2007 through January 2012.

Roswell Water Department and East Roswell Park Gymnasium roof have Energy Star rated cool roofs. Signage at the entrance of each building educates visitors about cool roofs and their benefits.

The city’s LED light fixture retrofit program has resulted in a 46 percent energy savings on indoor lighting and 60 percent energy savings on parking lot lighting at city facilities.

Active inspection program for residential and commercial compliance with the Georgia energy codes.

Night sky ordinance to limit the use of excess lighting that unnecessarily wastes energy and degrades the nighttime visual environment.

Green Power

Offers incentives for solar energy on new construction via its comprehensive Roswell Build Green Incentive Program.

Water Efficiency

Requires all new city-owned buildings to install high-efficiency plumbing fixtures such as WaterSense certified toilets, urinals and faucets.

Captures water in rain barrels and uses water to irrigate onsite gardens at five locations – Adult Recreation Center, Art Center West, Smith House Plantation, Bulloch Hall and Barrington Hall.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs WaterFirst Community since June 2009.

Completed audit with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division and is in compliance with the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District’s Water Supply and Water Conservation Management Plan, Wastewater Management Plan and Watershed Management Plan.

Provide incentives to developers and home builders to make new homes WaterSense certified via its comprehensive Roswell Build Green Incentive Program.
Trees & Greenspace

» No net loss of trees for government property policy calls for trees that are removed to be replaced with the equivalent of the tree density units removed. What cannot be replaced onsite will be planted on other government property.

» Roswell Recreation, Parks, Historic & Cultural Affairs Strategic Plan provides for the acquisition and connectivity of protected greenspace within and among communities, taking into account active, passive and undeveloped sites. The plan seeks to connect greenspaces via trails and greenways, both within the city and to neighboring communities.

» Designated as a Tree City USA Community for the past 21 years. To maintain this designation, the City of Roswell must have 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.

» Roswell’s Community Gardens are located at Leita Thompson Park and East Roswell Park. Both are open to citizens for $40 per plot. Participants may also assist with community plots that donate harvested crops to the food bank.

» The city provides the location and substantial publicity assistance for the Riverside Farmers Market.

Transportation & Air Quality

» Offers commute options to staff that include a flexible work arrangements policy that provides for telecommuting, compressed work week and flex time. Other commute options include active partnership in the Clean Air Campaign as well as bicycle parking and designated carpool parking spaces at government facilities. In 2012, city employees drove 45,200 fewer miles, prevented 23 tons of pollution, reduced emissions by 28 tons, and saved an estimated $23K in vehicle fuel and maintenance costs.

» Green fleet policy states that hybrids will be purchased when replacing fleet vehicles if they can meet the function of the use and life-cycle costs do not exceed 10 percent of the cheapest alternative. In the vehicle replacement program of FY 13, the city changed from Ford to Chevrolet due to better fuel efficiency. As a result, the overall MPG of the fleet improved by 2.67 percent combined City/Highway miles. The Highway MPG improved by 6.58 percent.

» Adopted a no-idle policy to prevent city vehicles from idling more than three minutes.

» Converted 10 Ford F-150 pick-up trucks to Propane AutoGas. The vehicles will be refueled at a city-owned station. Additional Propane AutoGas-fueled cars, vans and turf equipment are all slated to be put online in 2014. This alternate fuel program saves the city valuable dollars, lowers overall fleet emissions and increases vehicle life with lower maintenance and cleaner burning fuel.
» Adopted a complete streets policy to assure that roadway projects accommodate all users of the transportation systems including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, people with disabilities, the elderly, motorists, freight providers, emergency responders and adjacent land users.

» Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS) Intergovernmental Agreement with Sandy Springs, Alpharetta and Roswell to operate State Route 9 more efficiently and safely. The city also has an ATMS planned for Holcomb Bridge Road. Approximately half of the city’s traffic signals are located on these two corridors and the projects will help improve traffic flow, decrease emissions and reduce delays for the traveling public.

» Requires end-of-trip bicycle facilities at all community facilities. The city has installed bicycle racks at 75 percent of its facilities, with a plan in place to install the remainder within two years.

» Identified bicycle and pedestrian needs in its Transportation Master Plan. The city recently developed a Sidewalk Matrix, ranking sidewalk segments based on city policies and constructability, among other criteria. Recently completed a project providing sidewalk connections of a half mile around schools and parks. Roswell has been designated a Bicycle Friendly Community since 2006.

» Zoning ordinance parking requirements contains maximum parking allowances by type of use and encourages shared parking

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**Recycling & Waste Reduction**

» Adopted an environmentally preferable purchasing policy that gives preference to products that have been environmentally certified or eco labeled, that minimize harmful waste, conserve energy and water, maximize use of bio-based or recycled materials, are recyclable, contain otherwise less environmentally harmful substances and more. One example of this policy in action is the city’s retread tire program. In 2012, a total of 168 tires were retreaded for an actual total savings of $35,534.81 and none of the tires were placed in the landfill.

» Recycling containers in government facilities are located at individual desks and/or in common areas for traditional and non-traditional recycling. Items that may be recycled include all plastics, all glass, all paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, printer cartridges, toner cartridges, cell phones, electronics and steel cans. Approximately, 22 tons of materials from city facilities are collected and recycled each year.

» Copier toner, ink cartridges, rechargeable batteries, and electronics are collected from all city-owned facilities and recycled at the Roswell Recycling Center.

» Policy to purchase paper with at least 30 percent recycled content.

» Offers curbside recycling to single-family residents. Also, multi-family complexes are required to provide recycling. In 2011, more than 6,700 tons of recyclables were collected curbside.

» Roswell Recycling Center accepts electronics, batteries, cell phones, toner cartridges, latex paint, and vegetable oil. The city is beginning to work with local restaurants to collect their oil. If the city can collect enough, it will use the oil to process into biodiesel and use in city vehicles.
Holds two Household Hazardous Waste (HAW) Collection events each year for Roswell residents. Items collected at the event include: paint and paint thinner, pesticides, cleaners, household batteries, aerosols, automotive fluids and pool chemicals. A third-party is contracted to collect and dispose of materials. The Roswell Recycling Center has several on-going HHW programs that include latex paint, CFL light bulbs, motor oil, anti-freeze, rechargeable batteries, 12V and larger batteries and cell phones.

Curbside yard debris collection and a Recycling and Yard Waste Collection Guide are provided to residents. More than 8,100 tons of yard debris was collect and turned into mulch in 2011.

**Land Use**

Roswell’s Art Center West was a greyfield that was previously an old farm house. Classes for hand and wheel clay take place at the center. Arts Center East was created from a renovated 1960’s home that now offers cooking classes, art gallery, and painting classes. The Don White was previously a single family home that was renovated and is used for bike rental, office and meeting space.

An incentives section is built into the zoning ordinance for mixed use zoning districts and the Midtown Roswell Overlay District. Incentives include more permissive dimensional specifications, exemption from certain regulations, potential development impact fee waivers, application fee waivers and city-sponsored review process. The city’s Urban Redevelopment Plan addresses areas in the aging commercial core that are in need of redevelopment. This area was approved as an Opportunity Zone for Opportunity Tax Credits and has resulted in a total of 1,627 additional jobs in within the first 6 months. The city also has an Economic Development Incentive Policy that provides incentives for the retention or expansion of existing businesses located within the City of Roswell and encourages the location or relocation of new targeted businesses within the city.

**Education**

Educates city staff on environmental sustainability efforts through the employee intranet, internal video program, Recycle at Work program, Clean Air Campaign partnership and Roswell@Work e-newsletter.

Innovation

» Tree Planting Partnership is a public-private non-profit partnership to improve tree canopy and density on public lands. Since the program’s inception in 2001, the city has invested $51,000 and its partners have made an investment of more than $93,000 in beautification and tree canopy projects in Roswell. This massive effort includes 6,707 volunteer hours and the planting of 816 hardwood trees, and 4,313 other trees, shrubs and flowering plants.

» East Roswell Park Gymnasium has newly installed light enhancing skylights. During the day, scheduled activities are being conducted without artificial lighting. Even during partially cloudy days, the new skylights capture and broadcast enough light to provide ample lighting for racquet sports, basketball and child care activities.

» National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Certified Community Wildlife Habitat. The city is the third community in Georgia to receive this honor. The city and its residents provide habitat for wildlife throughout the community – in individual backyards, on school grounds and in public areas such as parks, community gardens, places of worship and businesses. Residents make it a priority to provide habitat for wildlife by providing the four basic elements that all wildlife need: food, water, cover and places to raise young. The city also educates its residents about sustainable gardening practices such as reducing or eliminating chemical fertilizers and pesticides, conserving water, planting native plants, removing invasive plants and composting. Since 2011, Roswell has worked alongside community members to achieve this certification and now has 225 homes, 11 schools, 14 parks and one farm that are individually certified wildlife habitats.

For more information on all the certified communities, visit the Certified Green Communities webpage at http://atlantaregional.com/environment/green-communities.