



davis Green guide

When it comes to innovative city planning and conservation of natural resources, few communities have done more than Davis.

For more than 40 years, Davis citizens have supported programs and projects that have earned it an eco-friendly reputation. With the growing understanding of the causes and potential consequences of global warming, this experience will be helpful as Davis examines its own contributions to climate change and how it can help set an example for other communities looking to do the same.

This guide takes a look at



Did you know?

There are 10 bike shops in Davis.

Davis' on-going conservation-related programs, what the city is currently doing to address global warming and promote long-term sustainability, and what we're planning to do next. More importantly, since action by individuals is required to successfully reduce Davis' greenhouse gas emissions, this guide provides practical steps that each of us can take that will make a difference.

What we've already done

For decades, resource conservation has been a core value of our community. Rather than treat it as an afterthought, conservation has shaped the design of Davis and how it functions. For example, after acknowledging that biking and walking were good ways to get around the community, we spent the next 40 years crisscrossing the town with bike lanes and greenbelts. This influenced building locations for parks,

schools and shopping centers to make it easier for folks to ride or walk to meet their daily needs.

Resource conservation therefore improved the quality of life in Davis by helping to create a bike and pedestrian network, by connecting neighborhoods, by increasing recreational opportunities, and by improving the general health of residents.

In addition to the primary reasons for getting people out of their cars, the benefits include reducing traffic, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Lots of other examples of these types of projects can be found throughout Davis. The article below lists a few of the hundreds of on-going conservation-related programs and projects that are happening in the community.

What we're doing now

In a strong and clear statement this spring, the Davis City Council approved a plan of action to reduce the city's greenhouse gas emissions and examine the long-term sustainability of the community. The council's plan set in motion a focused effort designed to build on the past success of the city's conservation-related programs. Specifically, the city is conducting an inventory of local greenhouse gas emissions, setting reduction targets, and identifying actions that will help meet those targets in a timely way.

In the meantime, the city council prioritized action on simple, low-cost measures the city can take in the short term to reduce greenhouse gas emissions without major impacts on the budget. One example is the implementation of a new "green" building program that educates contractors and homeowners about the advantages of building in a more sustainable way.

In addition to the focused effort on reduc-



Did you know?

Davis High students are taught about sustainable agriculture in the environmental science class.

ing greenhouse gas emissions, the city council initiated a discussion on the long-term sustainability of the community. Although complex factors exist, the basic concept of sustainability is fairly simple. As interpreted by most communities examining this issue, sustainability means meeting the community's present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In other words, a sustainable community would be one that has taken steps to remain healthy over the long term. Common principles in sustainability include:

- Maintaining mutually dependent environmental quality, economic health and social equity.

- Making informed decisions based on the long-term sustainability of the organization and community.

- Promoting public awareness and participation to achieve sustainability goals.

- Acknowledging that local actions have regional, national and global implications.

- Recognizing limited resources and prioritizing the most important and cost-effective actions.

- Creating cross-sector partnerships for achieving sustainability goals.

How a discussion regarding sustainability evolves in Davis remains to be seen, but it is clear that it will need to involve all key sectors of the community, including UC Davis, the school district, local conservation organizations, businesses, government agencies, religious organizations, civic groups, neighborhood associations, health care organizations and individuals. The city is working to organize this discussion.

More information will be available in the coming months on the city's sustainability Web page at www.cityofdavis.org/sustainability.

Davis has gone 'green'

Simply put, keep up the good work! Davis citizens have shown they can make a real difference. The key to successfully reducing our community's greenhouse gas emissions will be to build upon what we already do well. If reducing energy use and conserving resources is old hat to you, consider adding a few actions from the following pages to your routine. If you're new at this, start with simple actions and add as you go. Also, whatever your experience level, we invite you to sign the pledge on page 4 of the Green Guide and let us know how you're doing by visiting the city's sustainability Web page at: www.cityofdavis.org/sustainability.

Gone green

A recent announcement from a building trade organization declared, "Green has gone mainstream." It is encouraging to hear that so many community leaders have come to understand the benefits of sustainability. Here are a few of the many policies and programs that Davis has incorporated into our community:

- **Solar power systems on city buildings and property** – The photovoltaic system at the Veterans Memorial Center produces up to 16.9Kw, and the PVUSA solar power plant at

the old city land fill is rated at 850Kw.

- **Cogeneration at the city Wastewater Treatment Plant** – A 75Kw generator is fueled by methane gas collected as part of the sewage treatment process.

- **Community forest plan** – The city manages more than 18,000 energy-saving, carbon-absorbing trees.

- **Recycling and waste reduction program.**

- **Unitrans public transit system** – Joint ASUCD/city transit system that serves more than 20,000 riders a day on natural gas-fueled busses.

- **Storm water ponds/conveyance system** – Designed to create habitat in town (e.g., North Pond).

- **Bike transportation system (lanes, paths, greenbelts)** – More than 100 miles of bike lanes, paths and greenbelts.

- **Washer and toilet replacement incentives programs.**

- **Farmland conservation** – More than 2,500 acres preserved since 1988; an area more than 1/3rd the size of the city.

- **City bike program** – Encourages use of bikes by city

employees.

- **Bike stop light sensors/push buttons** – reduces delays for bike riders.

- **Green building program.**

- **Compact community design.**

- **EV program** – City vehicle fleet includes 19 electric vehicles.

- **LED stop lights** – Energy/cost savings and last longer than conventional stoplights.

- **City vehicle & equipment idling policy** – Policy to cut pollution, fuel use and cost.

- **Wetlands water treatment** – 400 acres that combines stormwater treatment and habitat.

- **Low-emission vehicle acquisition policy** – City policy to purchase lowest emission vehicles as practical.

Davis has a history of sharing its experiences with other communities when they express an interest in our programs. This will continue to be the city's approach. Also, innovative conservation-related projects are going on throughout the world which Davis can adapt to its own situations.

