

City of Atlantic Beach, Florida



PROJECT DETAILS

Certified on: November 18, 2022

Certification level: Gold

"Here, in the small town of Atlantic Beach, we knew it was not enough to passively appreciate our natural and community assets and just rely on hope that the next generation would have them. With our LEED for Cities Silver certification in 2019, we made a commitment to lean into direct action and got on a clear path to measure and track outcomes for a variety of metrics related to sustainability" says Mayor Ellen Glasser. "And we knew we needed to more actively engage our human assets if we expected to make progress. I am just thrilled that we have met success by achieving the prestigious Gold certification. This, along with our recently-adopted city vision and Community Action Plan, speak to our community's significant buy-in. Thanks to our Environmental Stewardship Committee, our staff and other experts, and our local elected officials, but - mostly - I want to thank our citizens. Together, we did this!"

SNAPSHOT

Country	United States
Project Area	2,240 acres 9.1 sq.km
Population	13,513 (2020)
Demographics	84.64% White; 7.33% Black or African American; 8.02% Other
Leadership	Mayor Ellen Glasser, Commissioner Candace Kelly
Key Stakeholders and Partners:	Environmental Stewardship Committee, Planning and Community Development, Department of Public Works Department of Parks and Recreation

SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES

- Educate the public on issues of global climate change and its related local impacts through the creation of an engaging outreach campaign.
- "Greening the energy supply" by increasing the local energy supply for both transportation and non-mobile sources toward the use of renewable, less carbon-intensive, and less toxic alternatives.
- Improve the city's Energy Performance above its original certification score or at least be comparable to global average by measuring the annual energy consumption and GHG emissions for the city on an annual basis and developing a sustainability action plan with public and private sector stakeholders.

Certification Overview

The City of Atlantic Beach achieved LEED Cities Gold certification by earning 67 points out of the possible 110 points available across nine credit categories as illustrated. Some of the significant strategies that contributed to the certification included a focused approach on strengthening natural systems to ensure that all waterways are fishable and swimmable by 2032; advocating for the enjoyment and conservation of natural public resources such as hiking trails; and demonstrating exceptional innovative performance like support for public art and for small, local businesses.



Performance Score | Key Metrics

100/100 | Transportation Performance

42/100 | Water Performance

100/100 | Energy and Emissions Performance

63/100 | Waste Performance

86/100 | Quality of Life Performance

20

0

IP NS TR WE EN MR QL IN RP

■ Performance Points ■ Credit Points ■ Missed Points



Category	Points Achieved/ Points Available
INTEGRATIVE PROCESS (IP)	1/5
NATURAL SYSTEMS AND ECOLOGY (NS)	8/9
TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE (TR)	10/15
WATER EFFICIENCY (WE)	1/11
ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (EN)	20/30
MATERIALS AND RESOURCES (MR)	2/10
QUALITY OF LIFE (QL)	15/20
INNOVATION (IN)	6/6
REGIONAL PRIORITY (RP)	4/4
TOTAL POINTS ACHIEVED	67/110

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INTEGRATIVE PROCESS

1/5

INTEGRATIVE PLANNING AND LEADERSHIP

The City of Atlantic Beach established a 2030 Comprehensive Plan full of sustainable and resilient elements. In addition, the City Commission sets annual priorities with environmental leadership listed as its top priority of 2021, "...environmental stewardship and leadership has been in the city's top priorities from 2018-2022."

The City of Atlantic Beach has also established a Sustainability and Resilience Community Action Plan (SRCAP) in October of 2022. This plan is intended to help the city take a positive, integrated action forward, and to ensure the community is supported with target goals, deadlines, and proven strategies to achieve goals alongside their LEED certification. Guiding principles for this plan include marsh preservation, a coastal vulnerability assessment, and a connectivity plan.



NATURAL SYSTEMS AND ECOLOGY

8/9

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION

The City of Atlantic Beach contains several natural preserves that contain wildlife habitats, wetlands, and shorelines. As of 2020, there is roughly 1,350 square feet of natural resource area per resident.

The city contains nearly 400 acres of Intracoastal Waterway marshes located in three protected preserve areas, Dutton Island, Tideviews and River Ranch. These are collectively referred to herein as the "Marsh Preserves". These areas were acquired and have been set aside to remain as passive and natural recreation areas with activities that have limited impact on these resources. Existing recreation uses are those that are customarily described as passive in nature including, but not limited to, fishing, hiking and biking, canoeing, kayaking, nature observation and camping.



The creation of the city's preserves has protected a large land area of undeveloped wilderness within the urban landscape along the Intracoastal Waterway including saltwater marshes, which are the most productive ecosystems on earth. Such as the Marsh Preserves, which offers the public the enjoyment of the saltwater marsh, pine flatwood forests, live oak, magnolia and water oak forests, and resource based recreation facilities. The Marsh also provides numerous recreational and educational opportunities for all ages to learn more about the area's history, the preserves' environmental systems and its management.

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TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE

10/15

HIGH PRIORITY SITE

The City of Atlantic Beach established a Mayport Road Vision Implementation Plan, which recommended reducing the speed limit, install pedestrian/bicycle friendly infrastructure, and providing economic incentives for redevelopment on Mayport Road. Since this plan's proposal, the city has been working to reduce Mayport Road's speed from 45 to 40 mph, constructing bike lanes, walking path, and funding a public art mural program.



SMART MOBILITY AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY

The City of Atlantic Beach has adopted four solutions that better promote efficient transportation systems while also reducing environmental impacts:

- **Passenger Information System (PIS):** The Jacksonville Transportation Authority provides real-time passenger information through the "NextBus" mobile application, which is accessible for any transit stop.
- **Global Positioning System (GPS)/General Packet Radio Service (GRPS):** All JTA buses are equipped with GPS systems and the locations of the buses can be tracked live on their website and mobile application.
- **Signal Synchronization and Transit Signal Priority:** "InSync" is a program that is used by FDOT to reduce travel times, delay times, and queue lengths.
- **Integrated Ticketing System:** "STAR Cards" are durable plastic cards that contain a microchip used to pay your fare when the card is tapped at the farebox. The JTA also has the "MY JTA" application where you can purchase single ride fares, as well as one or multi-day passes.

WATER EFFICIENCY

1/11

WATER PERFORMANCE

The City of Atlantic Beach has the total domestic water consumption for residential properties within the city was 397,227,000 gallons.

The population of Atlantic Beach according to the 2020 U.S. Census is 13,513. The per capita domestic water consumption was 80.54 gallons per person per day.

According to the St. Johns River Management District, the Northeast Florida regional average water consumption per person is 115 gallons.



Earning an arc score of 60/100.

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ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS 20/30

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The City of Atlantic Beach uses street lighting and public area lighting, which is supplied by Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA). JEA reported that 90% of the street and area lights in Atlantic Beach meet the ANSI/IESNA efficiency requirement and have an efficiency rating between 102-123 lumens/watts which exceeds the 100 lumen/watt requirement.

GRID HARMONIZATION OR LOW CARBON ECONOMY

JEA offers a time-of-day pricing program to provide an incentive to reduce the demand for electricity during "peak" times by allowing customers to pay lower rates for electrical usage during "off-peak" times. The lower rates reflect the different costs of providing electric service at different times of day, different days of the week, and different seasons.



The JEA time-of-day program is available only for commercial and industrial customers.



MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

2/10

WASTE PERFORMANCE

The City of Atlantic Beach has achieved a waste diversion rate of 27%, with the municipal solid waste generated per year per capita as 0.35 tons.

The city is noted for its achievement of continued recycling throughout the pandemic, which was halted by other neighboring communities and cities.



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QUALITY OF LIFE

15/20

QUALITY OF LIFE PERFORMANCE

The City of Atlantic Beach has achieved the quality of life performance score of by tracking and measuring the key indicators of education, equitability, prosperity, health and safety related to elevating the living standards of all people in the city (2015-2019):

- Unemployment Rate: 2.8%
- Gini coefficient: 0.5343
- Population with high school degree: 95.1%
- Population with bachelor's degree: 52.7%
- Median household income: \$78,059
- Violent crime rate per capita per year: .0035
- Median air quality index: 42.5
- Air quality days unhealthy for sensitive groups: 2
- Median gross rent as % of household income: 28.6%



CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City of Atlantic Beach engages with the community through a variety of channels, which aim to reach the maximum number of residents including traditionally unrepresented or underrepresented groups by providing access to resources online which can be accessed any time. Ways in which Atlantic Beach allows its residents to engage with local government and its events include openings on boards or committees, an e-newsletter, and City Commission meetings.



INNOVATION

6/6

INNOVATIVE PERFORMANCE

The City of Atlantic Beach demonstrated innovative performance by achieving the following:

Littering: Atlantic Beach has proposed to install baskets at popular beach access points that are easily identifiable; install cigarette butt canisters at the Beaches Town Center, beach accesses, and parks; install "smart" litter bins in strategic locations around the city.

Public Art: Atlantic Beach proposed to implement public art that will contribute to beautifying the corridor, building unity and pride within the community, education, economic development, and community involvement.



Senior House Repair: Atlantic Beach will create an application to assist in the process to better the health and safety of senior citizen homeowners.

Small Business Grant Program: The City of Atlantic Beach will provide support to local businesses that have been classified non-essential and mandated to close; have reopened or are reopening with reemployment of employees, social distancing requirements; and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); have no more than 25 employees; and have low to moderate salaries (at or below \$19.95/hour).

Polystyrene Prohibition: Atlantic Beach's City Commission leadership and action on regulating the use of polystyrene foam products.

Trend Improvements: The City of Atlantic Beach has earned credit for improvements in high school graduation rate, living wage, population with a high school degree, poverty rate, small businesses, unemployment rate, and violent crime.

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REGIONAL PRIORITY

4/4

The City of Atlantic Beach demonstrated achievement of the following strategies that address geographically specific socio-economic and environmental priorities:

Parking: The “Atlantic and Neptune Beach Smart Parking Plan” was developed to provide a roadmap for parking and mobility in the Beaches Town Center, which is located within both cities. This area is a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use area which makes the space prone to parking congestion and mobility issues. As a result, a parking pilot program was launched, which proposed alternative solutions to short-term issues.

In regard to long-term issues, there will need to be significant investment and additional parking.



Regional Trail Network: The North Florida Transportation Organization (NFTPO) created a master plan in 2018, which intends to coordinate existing trail planning efforts across Northeast Florida with other state and regional plans. The end result is the “Regional Multi-use Trails Report” that serves as guidance for multi-use trail implementation consistent with current state funding opportunities and programs.

Regional Priority Resiliency: Hurricanes Matthew and Irma in 2016 and 2017 caused widespread flooding damages in Duval County.

As a result, the City of Jacksonville created a Special Committee on Resiliency in 2020 to address flooding, storm surge and sea level rise in Duval County. This Committee and effort led to the collaboration of stakeholders and experts from throughout the County to coordinate on research, strategy development and policy recommendations to create a more resilient community that has the capacity to respond to and recover from extreme flooding events and to better adapt to changing conditions.



Regional Priority Tree Canopy:

Trees and urban canopy contribute positively to the well-being of the people of Duval County by enhancing the urban environment, providing clean air and wildlife habitats and mitigating stormwater runoff. As the population of region grows and development pressures continue well into the future, it is important to identify the natural resources that exist today and to be proactive in their efforts to preserve their resources. In an effort to preserve and enhance the city's urban tree canopy, the City of Atlantic Beach recently updated and strengthened its tree protection ordinance and has worked with the City of Jacksonville's Urban Forestry Department to plant about 500 trees on public property in the past two years using monies from local tree funds.