5-year Lookback on El Cerrito Environmental Efforts

With leadership from the El Cerrito City Council, the City has been able to move forward a number of significant environmental projects over the last 5 years. Some highlights include:

- Adopting an Expanded Foodware Ordinance that prohibits the use of single-use plastic foodware
- Adopting a Public Tree and Shrub Ordinance and becoming a Tree City USA as a result
- Adopting an Ordinance implementing SB 1383 and requiring organics recycling
- Adopting a Green Infrastructure Plan
- Installing an Electric Vehicle charger at the Recycling Center
- Shifting all municipal electrical accounts to MCE's Deep Green 100% renewable option
- Facilitating launch of a Household Hazardous Waste collection facility at the Recycling Center on Tuesdays
- Declaring a Climate Emergency and adopting a resolution calling for the City to strive for zero GHG emissions citywide
- Completing the San Pablo Avenue Green Stormwater Spine Project at Moeser Lane
- And, executing a new agreement with East Bay Sanitary increasing solid waste disposal and diversion services

For these efforts, the City received a Beacon Award from the Institute for Local Government in 2019 which recognizes and supports local agencies that are working to build more vibrant and sustainable communities, and ranked 2nd in Contra Costa County Climate Leader’s Report Card in 2021. The City remains focused on climate action and sustainability and is in the process of updating the Climate Action Plan. For more info. on these and other sustainability initiatives, please contact the City’s Operations + Environmental Services Division at wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Where Do Curbside Recyclables Go?

Following the crash of the international recycling markets, many articles and news reports have stated that only a small percentage of materials sorted for recycling are always recycled. While this may be the case in some communities across the nation, solid waste agreements and processing capabilities differ across every community and as a result, what may not be recyclable in one location, may be recyclable in another (e.g., in El Cerrito). The City of El Cerrito operates our own curbside recycling collection program, delivering the materials collected for processing to Napa Waste & Recycling Services (NWRS). According to data from NWRS, 90% of curbside materials received at their facility are sorted and captured for recycling. This means that on average there is just 10% of “contamination”, or materials that get sent to the landfill either because they are soiled with food waste or there is not a sufficient end market for the material. After processing, NRWS sends the sorted materials to a variety of markets within the United States and some are sold outside of the U.S. For example, tin cans are sent to Washington State, HDPE (#2) plastic is sent to British Columbia, milk and aseptic cartons are sent to Mexico, mixed paper and newspaper is sent to South Korea, and PET (#1) plastic is sent to Southern California and Georgia. For more information on what materials are accepted in the curbside recycling container, please visit el-cerrito.org/CurbsideProgram or contact lbrazil@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.
### SunShares Solar+ Discounts

The City of El Cerrito is working with Bay Area SunShares to offer discounts on solar + storage from September 1st to November 15th, 2022. Don’t miss your chance to switch to clean energy and make your home more resilient. In addition to discounts, SunShares offers:

- Free, no-obligation solar + storage proposals from pre-vetted installers
- Informational webinars about solar + storage
- Resources to learn about electrifying your home and transportation

Attend a SunShares Informational Webinar (registration required) on **September 22** from 5pm—6pm, **October 11** from 12pm—1pm, or **November 9** from 6pm—7pm.

Learn more and secure your discount at [www.bayareasunshares.org](http://www.bayareasunshares.org) before November 15th.

### Rainy Season is Coming

Creeks and culverts can overflow during heavy rains and the City needs assistance in assuring that the storm drain system functions properly. Here’s how you can help:

- If you have a creek on your property, make sure that debris and vegetation do not block the flow of water
- Make sure to not allow soil, trash, or other materials in the storm gutter area and/or pour anything other than storm water in the drain inlet
- If you have a storm drain grate in the street near your home or business, check it during heavy rains. Make sure nothing blocks the grate. If you observe an inlet that needs cleaning, contact the City at (510) 215-4369
- If your property is flooded by water from the street, report the problem to the City at (510) 215-4369.
- To prevent flooding from the street, the City provides up to ten (10) sandbags per household. The sand pile and bags are available at the El Cerrito Recycling Center (7501 Schmidt Lane). Please bring proof of residency and check in with Recycling Staff

If you have questions about storm drain system maintenance or need additional assistance, please contact Public Works at (510) 215-4369.

### ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RERC Hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recycling Center Hours</strong>: The Recycling + Environmental Resource Center (RERC) is open six days per week, Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Saturdays 9:00 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. For the upcoming holidays, the Center will be closed as follows: <strong>Labor Day</strong> (Monday 9/5), <strong>Veterans Day</strong> (Friday, 11/11), <strong>Thanksgiving</strong> (Thursday, 11/24 &amp; Friday, 11/25).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Wed. Monthly</td>
<td><strong>Free Tour of the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center</strong>: Join the City for a behind-the-scenes look at the LEED Platinum Certified Recycling Center. Tours at an alternative time can also be scheduled for a fee. For more information call City staff at (510) 559-7686.</td>
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<td>3rd Sat. Monthly</td>
<td><strong>Compost Giveaway</strong>: Free compost for El Cerrito residents and businesses only. Compost will be available at the Upper Cerrito Vista Parking Lot adjacent to the tennis courts (entrance off of Avis Drive). Available while supplies last. Limit of 5 cubic feet per household or business (approx. seven 5-gallon buckets).</td>
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<td><strong>Sept 11, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>Baxter Creek Volunteer Work Days</strong>: Help remove litter and invasive plants from this jewel on the Ohlone Greenway. Work days will take place from 10 am—12 pm on the first Sunday of each month, except during major holiday weekends. RSVP to (510) 215-4350 or <a href="mailto:cbennett@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us">cbennett@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us</a>.</td>
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<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td><strong>El Cerrito Green Teams</strong>: Join the Green Teams for a clean-up at the northern gateways to the city. Sign up to receive the latest info on the cleanups in the City’s monthly e-news at el-cerrito.org/greenhappenings. RSVP to (510) 215-4350 or <a href="mailto:green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us">green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us</a>.</td>
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<td>Oct. 8</td>
<td><strong>Fall Citywide Garage Sale</strong>: Shop the Citywide Garage Sale on Saturday, October 8, from 9am-3pm. Registration deadline to be included on the map is Friday, 9/9. Maps will be available online one week prior to the event. To download the map or for more info, visit <a href="http://www.el-cerrito.org/garagesale">www.el-cerrito.org/garagesale</a>.</td>
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