

City of Lancaster Sustainability Statements and Quotes for the Press

Alternative Energy

When the City of Lancaster took on the charge of creating a sustainable Net Zero community, the goal was to not only develop a greener city but also establish long-term partnerships, devise win-win revenue streams, and design foundational programs that other communities can replicate. We've reached all of these objectives while also generating more than 1,000 jobs associated with these efforts.

Net Zero means producing as much energy as is used. Companies such as BYD and KB Home, along with a multitude of solar developers, have quickly propelled Lancaster along this path. Private and City solar developments have reached nearly 125 Megawatts (MW), achieving more than 58% of our peak load goal of 215 MW. This includes more than 77 MW of City operational solar installations; more than 25 MW of commercial and residential uses, with 3,160 single-family residential solar permits issued as of August 1; and 9 MW on Antelope Valley College and A.V. Union High School District sites.

However, for the City to truly advocate for a cleaner, healthier environment and sustainable future, we needed to do more than facilitate the green efforts of others. We needed to take our own reins to lead the charge — and we have. The acquisition of 18,000 streetlights from Southern California Edison is an investment that will save the City significant funds and provide countless options to enhance public safety and community services while utilizing more energy-efficient lighting.

To further ensure that our residents and local businesses have the full privilege of making the green energy choice, Community Choice Aggregate “Lancaster Choice Energy” has been formed. LCE empowers residents and business owners to choose partial or 100% solar-generated power at an affordable cost. The program also enhances our local economy. Reduced energy costs equal increased discretionary and operational income, which means more local spending and greater incentives for businesses to locate in Lancaster.

No matter how you look at it, Lancaster Choice Energy brings value, revenue and sustainability to our community, and we expect the program to grow and increase in positive economic impact over time. Through our green efforts, we are creating a healthier, cleaner, more thriving community for our citizens and the environment.

BYD Expansion (Quotes)

“The expansion of Build Your Dreams and the continuous growth of our partner relationship are indicative of the true value of public/private partnerships,” said Lancaster Mayor R. Rex Parris. “Collaborating with like-minded entities produces ongoing benefits that contribute to the betterment of our community and the opportunities available to those who live here, as well as

the advancement of each organization's vision to become the best possible steward for its role in creating a sustainable Antelope Valley."

"Our focus in the City of Lancaster has been to facilitate the growth of our local economy and job market with the foundation of viable, sustainable employment that creates legacy and longevity for our citizens," said Lancaster Mayor R. Rex Parris. "We strive to attract businesses and industries that offer careers that truly support the needs and desires of local families. BYD has been exemplary in not only providing stable jobs with future growth and development opportunities but also a challenging work environment that is ever-expanding and reflective of organizational stewardship. BYD's corporate citizenship promotes and nurtures an inspiring level of morale, which is sure to retain and grow its nearly 700-member employee base."

"The City of Lancaster is a city of firsts, setting the stage for advancements in many areas. To this end, we have paired our progressive efforts with an equally bold and visionary partner – Build Your Dreams," said Lancaster Mayor R. Rex Parris. "Our many achievements, independently and in concert, have contributed to the City's steady rise as a municipal frontrunner in the alternative energy arena. Such efforts have earned Lancaster the California State designation of the Alternative Energy Research & Development Center of Excellence. The expansion of BYD's electric vehicle manufacturing facility and the multitude of other energy-focused endeavors we undertake are testaments to our commitment to continue moving forward to advance the sustainability agenda."

"Creating a more stabilized local economy in the aftermath of the Great Recession has been a top priority for the City of Lancaster," said Lancaster Mayor R. Rex Parris. "BYD has been essential in building an immediate employment base that has helped rejuvenate the local workforce. Moreover, the quality jobs offered contribute to the long-term stability of employees who benefit from the promise of a growing global industry — right here in their own community."

City Infrastructure

The integrity and design of our streets are significant factors in our community, not just from a financial maintenance and liability standpoint, but, most significantly, from a safety and wellness perspective.

In recent years, the City of Lancaster has focused heavily on traffic-calming measures, road maintenance, and the installation of trails and bikeways throughout the community.

Signal improvements at intersections, precautionary measures near schools, and pedestrian and bike-friendly landscapes have resulted in reduced speeds and fewer accidents. What's more, people have a safer environment in which to cycle, resulting in increased activity and healthier citizens. We anticipate even greater success as the 215 miles of bicycle lanes in our current Master Plan are completed.

With our new Revive 25 project, the City will touch every street in Lancaster over the next ten years, making some form of improvement to each one. Proactively maintaining our City streets will increase the longevity of the City's infrastructure and enhance the safety of those traveling throughout our community every day.

Water Crisis

The City of Lancaster's drought mitigation efforts started a long time ago, but the fact of the matter is – we're a desert community – and as the water crisis continues to elevate throughout the State, all community members are compelled to take more drastic measures to conserve this precious resource.

Potable water is extremely valuable to our community and must not be wasted. The City is proud to be currently using recycled water on 700 acres of developed land. However, this is simply a starting point for us. We have plans for exponential expansion in the next few years.

We strongly encourage residents and businesses to consider multiple options for water conservation, including desert-friendly landscaping and recycled water system installation. Everyone can do something to make a difference.

Health & Wellness

Active and motivated citizens are key to forging a dynamic future for the entire Antelope Valley. Through programs such as the Wellness Challenge and The Corporate Challenge, the City is encouraging everyone to eat healthy, get moving and reap the lifetime of rewards that will result.

With the recent launch of the Mayor's Health & Wellness Council, the stage has been set for local youth to benefit from research and practices that will instill healthy habits to reduce childhood obesity and establish life-long personal wellness management.

Additionally, with the forthcoming Medical Main Street adding to our already vast network of medical resources, everyone in this community will have every opportunity to achieve a healthy lifestyle.

By creating more accessible means for healthy eating, physical activity, wellness education and medical care, our community can transition from being one of the highest in severe health conditions to one of the lowest. This is a non-negotiable piece of the equation for our City's future. After all, what good is a sustainable community without sustainable life?