



CITY OF AUSTIN SUSTAINABILITY ACHIEVEMENTS

JULY 2012 HIGHLIGHTS

COMPREHENSIVE AND STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

- Developed and adopted **Imagine Austin** comprehensive plan with sustainability as an organizing principle. (*Planning and Development Review with many other contributing Departments*)
- Launched the City-wide **Sustainability Action Agenda**, a comprehensive inventory of activities within 40 Initiative areas, including 153 projects and programs across the City organization, at the first annual Austin Earth Day Festival (over 4,000 citizens attended the event). (*Office of Sustainability*)
- Created a City-wide brand for sustainability – **Rethink: Austin** – that can be adapted to any department’s message on a flexible basis. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- Competed nationally and was selected as one of 10 pilot cities that will help develop the **STAR Community Index**, a new community sustainability benchmarking standard. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- **Identified key sustainability planning criteria** for City Capital Improvement Projects and Bond Development, including environmental, social, and economic factors. (*Capital Planning Office*)
- Secured (with CAPCOG) HUD Sustainable Communities Planning Grant totaling \$3.7 million dollars to create an innovative model using **advanced computing for planning future sustainable developments**. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services*)

GREEN BUILDING AND GREEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GREEN BUILDING

- Rated the 10,000th single-family home in Austin Energy’s Green Building program – this **10,000th home is 5-star rated and net-zero energy capable**. (*Austin Energy*)
- Evaluated The Austonian as part of Austin Energy’s Green Building program – **the first residential high-rise to achieve a 4-star rating**. (*Austin Energy*)
- Completed the new Austin Animal Shelter (on track for **LEED Gold certification**). (*Animal Services, Capital Planning, Public Works*)
- Received **LEED for Existing Buildings Gold Certification** for the Austin Convention Center, becoming the first such facility in the state and second in the nation to receive this honor. (*Austin Convention Center, Public Works*)
- Completed the Northwest Recreation Center Renovation (on track for **LEED Gold Certification**), McBeth Recreation Center Renovation (achieved **LEED CI Silver certification**), and Dittmar Recreation Center (on track for **LEED certification**). (*Parks and Recreation, Capital Planning Office, Public Works*)
- Completed Public Safety Training Facility projects (achieved **LEED Silver Certification**). (*Austin Police & Fire Departments, Public Works*)
- Completed Austin-Bergstrom International Airport Ground Transportation Staging Area project (on track for **LEED Gold Certification**). (*Aviation, Public Works*)

- Created construction equipment specifications to **reduce greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants** from construction projects. (*Public Works*)
- Changed from hot mix to warm mix asphalt, which **decreases production temperatures and energy use, as well as reduces emissions** and odors generated at the plant and at the paving site. (*Public Works*)

GREEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Secured a **HUD Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant totaling \$3 million** to support the development of a 208-acre sustainable community in the Colony Park neighborhood north of Loyola Lane between Johnny Morris Road and Decker Lane. (*Neighborhood Housing & Community Development*)
- Partnered with the non-profit Foundation Communities on M Station Apartments, a 150-unit rental development with affordable units that achieved a **5-star rating from Austin Energy Green Building and LEED Platinum certification**. (*Neighborhood Housing & Community Development, Austin Energy*)
- Completed more than 1,400 units of housing at Mueller redevelopment that achieved sustainable design criteria, and are **on track with the overall goal of 25% affordable housing**. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services, Austin Energy*)
- Funded 500 units of affordable housing for low-income residents – **100% of the units met Austin Energy Green Building requirements**. (*Neighborhood Housing & Community Development*)

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Completed over 40 commercial projects totaling approximately 1.5 million square feet, 678 multi-family units, and 735 single-family homes at the Mueller redevelopment, all of which have earned **Austin Energy Green Building ratings and/or LEED certifications**. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services, Austin Energy*)
- Completed 75 acres of publicly-accessible open space at the Mueller redevelopment that included **restoration of Blackland Prairie**. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services*)
- Secured an economic development agreement with Apple that outlines a commitment to create **3,600 local jobs, use 100% GreenChoice energy, and build 1,000,000 square feet of office space that will be LEED certified**. (*City Council / Mayor's Office, Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services, Austin Energy*)
- **Achieved 4-Star Austin Energy Green Building rating and LEED Silver certification** for the Block 21 Project, a significant public / private partnership that included the W Hotel & Condos and ACL Live Studios. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services, Austin Energy*)
- Completed master development agreements with **sustainability objectives for Green Water Treatment Plant and Energy Control Center redevelopment**. The overall Seaholm District was selected as one of 10 National EcoDistrict Institute pilot projects. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services, Office of Sustainability*)
- Integrated air quality, mobility, site, energy and climate, water, and recycling requirements into the agreement for the **Circuit of the Americas racetrack and operations**. (*Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services, Office of Sustainability*)

GREEN BUSINESS PRACTICES AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

- Created the **Austin Green Business Leaders** program, which has officially recognized 32 local businesses that include Dell, Whole Foods, Goodwill, Buenos Aires Café, and SNAP Kitchen for greening their operations. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- Assisted with the creation of the **Central Texas Sustainability Leadership Forum**, with participation from corporate / private sector sustainability leaders including Dell, AMD, Whole Foods, Seton, Rackspace, and The University of Texas. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- Released Green Tourist information in the form of a **Green Gems Map** of downtown Austin, provided to visitors at the Information Desk at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. (*Office of Sustainability, Aviation*)
- Implemented **Green Seal** custodial standards at City Hall. (*Building Services*)
- Trained supervisory staff in an accredited course concerning **environmental best standards for industrial / commercial cleaning services**. (*Building Services*)
- Implemented programs such as Nightwatchman, PC Refresh, and Virtualization, as well as improvements to mission critical HVAC systems in the City's primary Data Center, which resulted in **annual cost savings of more than \$1 million and diversion of 35,000 pounds of waste from landfills**. (*Communications & Technology Management*)
- Started using iPads for Parks and Recreation Department and Small & Minority Business Resources Boards and Commission meetings to **reduce paper usage**. (*Communications & Technology Management*)
- Created an On-Line Learning Initiative which allows employees to train via their computers rather than driving to different classrooms, **saving time and gas, while reducing carbon emissions**. (*Public Works*)

RENEWABLE ENERGY, ENERGY CONSERVATION, SMART GRID, AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Achieved the goal of powering City facilities with **100% renewables** through Austin Energy's GreenChoice program, avoiding 163,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions in 2011. (*All Departments*)
- Began receiving power from the **30 MW Webberville Solar project** to meet the goal of 200 MW of solar capacity by 2020. Contracted for additional wind power that will help reach 25% renewables by the end of 2012 and 35% renewables by 2020. (*Austin Energy*)
- Began receiving power from the **Nacogdoches Biomass Power Plant** in East Texas this year. (*Austin Energy*)
- Provided more than 773 kilowatts of solar power on 41 City facility rooftops through the **Municipal Solar Program**, including new photovoltaic systems at the new Animal Shelter, George Washington Carver Museum and Library, and Northwest Recreation Center. (*Austin Energy*)
- Built **15 Solar Outdoor Learning Centers** with ARRA funding, to advance AISD-developed curriculum that teaches students about renewable energy. (*Austin Energy, Austin Independent School District*)
- Approved a new tiered-rate plan, including an "avoided cost" energy efficiency program with line items for energy efficiency services, assistance for disadvantaged customers, residential customer assistance, **Value-of-Solar adjustments**, etc. (*Austin Energy*)

ENERGY CONSERVATION

- **Weatherized 1,678 homes** with \$7 million in ARRA grant funds. (*Austin Energy*)
- **Offset the need for more than 43 megawatts of power** in 2011 through Residential, Commercial, and Green Building energy efficiency efforts. (*Austin Energy*)
- **Earned Energy Star certification** for One Texas Center for the third consecutive year. (*Building Services*)
- Achieved **100% compliance with Energy Conservation Audit & Disclosure Ordinance** requirements for the 25 City facilities that are subject to the policy. (*Austin Energy*)

SMART GRID

- Continued to partner with **Pecan Street Project** to advance smart grid innovation and adoption. (*Austin Energy*)
- Began construction on the **Pike Powers Energy Commercialization Lab**, which is scheduled for completion this year. (*Austin Energy*)
- Implemented Electric Vehicle (EV) pilot program to understand grid impact, consumer behavior, and supporting technologies for what represents **the densest concentration of non-fleet EVs in the nation**. (*Austin Energy*)
- Implemented **Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) pilot** to test and evaluate next generation technologies. (*Austin Energy*)

CLIMATE PROTECTION

- Achieved **Climate Registered Status** from Climate Registry after having the City's carbon footprint third-party verified. Austin is 1 of 7 cities in the country to achieve this. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- **Awarded 3 Community Climate Challenge grants** to create local carbon offsets from solar photovoltaic projects at M Station and Yellow Bike Project, and from direct sequestration into trees by TreeFolks. (*Austin Energy, Office of Sustainability*)
- Positioned Austin Climate Protection Program within the City Manager's Office as part of the Office of Sustainability. Recruited and hired new **Climate Program Manager Zach Baumer**. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- Participated in **2011 C40 Climate Leadership Summit** in Brazil and **International City Manager's Association (ICMA) Sustainability Fellows Exchange Program** with Australia. (*Office of Sustainability*)
- Continued implementation of 28 building and Department Climate Protection Plans, resulting in a **42% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions** in 2011 from our baseline in 2007. (*All Departments*)
- Produced the **Climate Action Report** for 2010-2011 on progress made by the City in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. (*Office of Sustainability*)

MOBILITY, BIKE AMENITIES, GREEN FLEETS AND AIR QUALITY

MOBILITY

- Founded the **Downtown Austin Transportation Management Association**, to work with employers to help employees and visitors find and use viable travel options to reduce the incidence of driving alone at rush hour. (*Transportation*)
- Initiated **Project Connect**, a cooperative partnership between Central Texas transportation agencies aimed at implementing a high-capacity transit system. (*Transportation*)

- Implemented the **“think outside your car” media campaign** to inform over 600,000 Central Texans of ways to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and explore alternative commute options to improve air quality. *(Transportation)*
- Developed **community Electric Vehicle charging network, Plug-In EVERYwhere**, with 116 stations installed throughout Austin – 50 at City facilities, the remainder at businesses. The network is powered completely by renewable energy through the GreenChoice program. *(Austin Energy)*
- Executed a Department of Energy grant, The Texas River Cities Initiative, to plan for **electric vehicle deployment and infrastructure** in Central Texas. *(Austin Energy)*
- Became one of the first cities in the nation to provide **2 car-share programs** in partnership with Car2go and Zipcar providers. *(Transportation)*
- **Retimed downtown traffic signals to more efficiently address roadway congestion**, resulting in enhanced mobility, improved safety and reduced fuel consumption and environmental costs. *(Transportation)*
- Launched a **parking cash-out pilot program** for City Hall, Central Library and History Center employees, providing the commute reduction option to reduce congestion, encourage alternative transportation opportunities, and improve air quality. *(Transportation)*

BIKE AMENITIES

- Held the first **Viva Streets** event downtown on 6th Street on Sunday, May 20th – it is estimated that 10,000 citizens participated in the bike-friendly event that also encouraged community building and economic viability for the 6th Street corridor. *(Public Works, Transportation, and other Departments)*
- Selected by the Bikes Belong Foundation as 1 of 6 showcase cities to be a **Green Lane Project City** as part of an initiative to install protected bicycle lanes and related facilities over the next two years. *(Public Works)*
- **Completed an additional 1.37 miles of multi-use trails**, with multiple others in various stages of design, permitting and construction. *(Parks and Recreation)*
- Installed approximately **30 miles of new bike network and 21 linear miles of new or upgraded ADA sidewalks**. *(Public Works)*
- Began working with Bike Share of Austin to initiate a **bike-share program by the spring of 2013** to improve air quality, mitigate congestion, and address “first/last mile” predicaments often associated with the use of a public transit system. *(Public Works)*

GREEN FLEETS

- **Increased the percentage of alternatively fueled and hybrid vehicles** in the City’s fleet from 52% in 2009 to 67% in 2012. *(Fleets, Office of Sustainability)*
- **Completed 2020 Carbon Neutral Fleet Plan**, which includes three parts: life-cycle, environmental, and cost/benefit analysis; fuel infrastructure planning; and employee training. *(Fleets, Office of Sustainability)*
- Increased alternative fuel purchases to 65% of the annual total; between 2010 and 2011, **B20 - Biodiesel use increased by 80% and E85 – Ethanol use increased by 100%**, while unleaded gasoline use is down 30%. *(Fleets, Office of Sustainability)*
- Purchased 17 vehicles fueled by compressed natural gas in 2011, which will use **35% - 50% less fuel that traditional trash and recycling trucks**. *(Austin Resource Recovery)*

- **Added solar panels to ambulances** that reduced idling, and combined with moving the fleet to a Ford F450 chassis, resulted in a 47% improvement in miles per gallon, a 31% reduction in CO2 emissions, and annual fuel cost savings of \$4,769 per year per ambulance. (*Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services*)
- **Converted 60 Aviation, Austin Energy, and Austin Water gasoline-fueled vehicles to propane**, decreasing CO2 by 653,000 metric tons and saving over \$194,000 in fuel costs over the useful life of the vehicles. (*Aviation, Austin Energy, Austin Water Utility*)

AIR QUALITY

- Improved local enforcement of State **heavy duty vehicle idling limits** with assistance from City of Austin police officers, Austin Code Compliance officers, city parking attendants, and Austin downtown Rangers. (*Transportation*)
- **Increased public awareness of idling issues** with one-stop-shop for citizen inquiries at www.engineoff.org, and with additional hotline and online reporting options for residents. (*Transportation*)
- Opened the Cell Phone Lot at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, **reducing circling and idling activities**. (*Aviation, Public Works*)

WATER CONSERVATION, WATER REUSE AND INNOVATIVE WATER RATES

- Achieved **lower peak and average day water use levels in 2011** than those during the less severe drought of 2009, despite 2011's record-breaking drought and heat conditions. (*Austin Water Utility*)
- **Saved approximately 11.3 million gallons of potable water** for indoor use and 33.7 million gallons for irrigation through projects rated by Austin Energy Green Building. (*Austin Energy*)
- Activated a reclaimed water main to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, providing an **alternative water source for irrigation and cooling** that will conserve 25 million gallons of potable water annually. (*Austin Water Utility, Aviation*)
- Implemented the **Lawn Remodel Program** to respond to drought conditions, which resulted in nearly 900 customers signing up to replace 3.5 million square feet of turf with drought-tolerant landscaping. (*Austin Water Utility*)
- Completed a successful process with the Austin Water Joint Subcommittee to propose an **innovative new water rate structure**. (*Austin Water Utility*)

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION, GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, AND HABITAT MANAGEMENT

- **Purchased 611 acres in the sensitive Edwards Aquifer recharge zone** to protect water quality and connect more than 9,000 acres of contiguous conservation land in Travis and Hays counties via the 30-mile Violet Crown Trail. (*Real Estate Services, Austin Water Utility, Watershed Protection*)
- Obtained easements for and maintained **an additional 139 acres of park land** during FY 2011. (*Parks and Recreation*)
- Completed development of an *Invasive Species Management Plan*, **only the second such plan in the U.S.** (*Multiple Departments*)
- Completed a draft of the new **Habitat Conservation Plan for Barton Springs and Austin Blind Salamanders**, which is required for renewal of the operations permit for Barton Springs Pool. (*Watershed Protection*)
- Completed **Lundelius McDaniels Biofiltration Pond** for stormwater runoff treatment before it enters Barton Springs recharge areas. (*Watershed Protection*)

- Completed **rain garden projects** at Big Stacy Park, Northwest Recreation Center, One Texas Center and at the traffic circles at the intersection of Rio Grande and 10th and 18th Streets. (*Watershed Protection, Public Works*)
- Completed Land Development Code and Environmental Criteria Manual revisions to improve **protection of aquatic habitat along Lake Austin shoreline** and promote environmentally compatible shoreline modifications and access facilities. (*Watershed Protection*)
- Revised Land Development Code and Environmental Criteria Manual requirements for rainwater use to **conserve potable water, enhance water quality, and sustain the health of urban landscapes**. (*Watershed Protection, Austin Water Utility*)
- **Initiated Watershed Protection Ordinance revisions** to improve creek and floodplain protection, prevent unsustainable public expense on drainage systems, simplify development regulations, and minimize impacts on the ability to develop land. (*Watershed Protection*)
- Worked with the **Green Roof Advisory Group** to produce a final report for City Council, including policy recommendations, performance standards, and a five-year work plan, as well as a website with information on green roofs in Austin. (*Multiple Departments*)
- Planted **15,000 trees and 5,500 seedling trees** on public and private property in partnership with TreeFolks. (*Parks and Recreation, Austin Energy, Planning & Development Review, Public Works, Office of Sustainability*)
- Held the **State of the Urban Forest Summit** in 2011, with City staff providing presentations and facilitating work group sessions. (*Multiple Departments*)
- Co-sponsored the **first biennial Kent Butler Summit** on the Future of the Barton Springs Zone of the Edwards Aquifer. (*Austin Water Utility, Watershed Protection*)
- Celebrated **15th anniversary of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve**, by conducting workshops to educate public service owners, managers, and contractors about working in endangered species habitats. (*Austin Water Utility*)
- Produced the **Annual 2010 State of the Environment Report** with key data on creeks, lakes and rivers, aquifers, urban forest, open space and habitat, and air quality. (*Watershed Protection*)

ZERO WASTE

- Changed the name of the Solid Waste Services department to **Austin Resource Recovery** as part of a re-branding effort to coincide with Zero Waste goals and to challenge the notion of “waste” vs. “resources.” (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Adopted the Austin Resource Recovery Master Plan with a commitment to reach **Zero Waste by 2040** or sooner, which means reducing the amount of waste sent to area landfills by at least 90%. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- **Adopted the Universal Recycling Ordinance**, which requires offices and multifamily complexes to provide recycling services to their employees and tenants. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Prepared for successful adoption of **Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance**. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- **Diverted more than 16,000 tons of waste from landfills** by Austin Energy Green Building rated projects. (*Austin Energy*)
- **Diverted more than 130 tons of materials from landfills** with Recycled Reads, the Austin Public Library’s bookstore. (*Public Libraries*)
- Began using **recycled glass and concrete as base materials** in sidewalk and roadway maintenance projects. (*Public Works*)

- Re-blended **8,333 gallons of Austin Reblend paint** and reused or recycled 341,025 pounds of household hazardous waste in 2011. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Hosted two **Drug Take-Back events** in partnerships with the Austin Police Department and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Reduced landfill waste at Rutherford Lane Campus and One Texas Center by approximately 400,000 plastic waste can liners per year at a **cost savings of \$5,000 per year**. (*Building Services*)
- Debuted **“Dare to Go Zero,”** the City’s first reality TV show in which four families tried to reduce their waste stream for a chance to win eco-friendly prizes. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Installed 19 public recycling and trash containers that are **solar-powered compactors called Big Bellys** on Guadalupe Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to 30th Street. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Offered **composting and recycling at 24 City co-sponsored events**, resulting in an average diversion rate of 53%. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Offered 67 free composting classes through the **Home Composting Rebate Program** in 2011, teaching triple the number of residents compared to 2010. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)
- Piloted an **Event Recycling Rebate** as an incentive for event organizers to make their outdoor events more sustainable and help achieve the City’s Zero Waste goal. (*Austin Resource Recovery*)

URBAN AGRICULTURE

- Developed a web portal and newsletter to consolidate **local food system information and city resources**. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program*)
- **Streamlined access to Austin Water Utility taps and waivers** with additional benefits for qualified projects. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program, Austin Water Utility*)
- Established a joint process with Neighborhood Partner Program to provide **funding and support for community garden projects**. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program*)
- Partnered with City departments to investigate **opportunities for reducing food deserts and providing access to local food** where it’s most needed. (*Sustainability Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program, Health & Human Services, Economic Growth & Redevelopment Services*)
- Established zoning clarification for urban farms and community gardens, **expanding the potential for food production citywide**. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program*)
- **Generated 122,000 pounds of fresh produce** from 31 Austin community gardens. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program*)
- **Avoided 1,200 tons of greenhouse gases** by Austin community gardens and local food production. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program*)
- Worked with the community to advance new projects and initiatives that include **10 community, training, and demonstration gardens**. (*Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Community Garden Program*)