

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Launching the Austin 2030 District*

- **Year Complete:** 2018
- **Local Government:** City of Austin, TX
- **Local Foundation:** The Meadows Foundation

Project Purpose

To launch the Austin 2030 District, a voluntary initiative to reduce the energy and water consumption and carbon emissions from Austin buildings.

Key Lessons Learned

Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.

It was determined by the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) that improved, simpler data access by third-party businesses is needed in Texas and efforts were made to move this forward. The PUCT and Texas investor-owned utilities came to a settlement agreement that will lay out a simpler process to customers energy data. This created new opportunities for energy management services, many of the professional members of Austin 2030 will benefit from this new service, as will building members. The district will continue to provide a platform for building owners and professional stakeholders to discuss important topics like benchmarking, PACE, data access and much more.

Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).

The district director began work by identifying the early adopters through strategic relationship targets based on companies, individuals, and vendors that were actively engaged in community sustainability efforts, focusing on commitments to efficiency (water, energy, and waste). Once the early adopters were identified and engaged within the district, the director began to focus on building owners that had an interest in the business case for efficiency, such as government owned and/or low-income facilities. This work very quickly led to a word-of-mouth-driven growth for the district, growing over ten million square feet in 2017.

Additional Information and Resources

Drawing on the momentum of the 2030 districts that successfully emerged in both Dallas and San Antonio, the Austin 2030 district was launched in January, 2017. Read more about the event, and their partnership with the South central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER) [here](#).