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AUSTIN'S MUELLER COMMUNITY BECOMES WORLD'S LARGEST LEED GOLD NEIGHBORHOOD

City of Austin/Catellus Partnership Becomes “Standard-Bearer” for Sustainable Development

AUSTIN, Texas – Nov. 16, 2016 – In Central Texas, where summer often features a series of 100-degree highs and stretches without significant rainfall, one Central Austin neighborhood is comfortable and green as it earns LEED Gold certification for its commitment to sustainability.

The 700-acre [Mueller](#) redevelopment, a joint project between the [City of Austin](#)'s Economic Development Department and [Catellus](#) Development Corp., recently became the largest neighborhood in the world to become Stage 3 LEED-certified by the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) (USGBC), and the first neighborhood in Texas to earn LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) Stage 3 Gold Certification under the pilot program.

“Mueller’s strength as a green community begins with its central location, which helps increase urban density, slow Central Texas sprawl and, ultimately, reduce commute times and auto emissions,” said Gail Vittori, co-director for the [Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems](#), which served as the project sustainability consultant. “Additionally, Mueller has achieved many sustainable milestones along the way in terms of its land use, building design, construction efforts and property owner commitments. All of these endeavors have resulted in a comprehensive approach to a community that promotes healthy design and sustainability, which underscore Mueller’s impressive performance and certification.”

“LEED for Neighborhood Development goes beyond individual green buildings and is changing the way we design and build sustainable communities,” said Mahesh Ramanujam, president & CEO, USGBC and Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI). “By progressing to and achieving this certification, the Mueller neighborhood is helping to lead the way for the development of smarter and healthier communities while prioritizing environmental and human health in our built environment. Designed to inspire and help create better, more sustainable, well-connected neighborhoods, LEED for Neighborhood Development is the next step in achieving our goal of a sustainable building for all within this generation.”

Highlights of Mueller’s sustainability results to date include:

- Mueller has more than 1,175 single family homes that have achieved an Austin Energy Green Building rating, a nationally recognized rating system that was a precursor to LEED certification (more than 1,025 homes have earned three stars, 63 homes earned four stars and another 87 homes earned five stars).



- Mueller has three Platinum, six Gold and five Silver LEED-certified, including [Dell Children's Medical Center](#), the first LEED Platinum certified hospital in the world; [Ronald McDonald House](#), the first building in Austin to earn LEED Platinum certification for new construction; and [H-E-B at Mueller](#), one of the first grocery stores in the U.S. to earn LEED Gold certification, in addition to more than 40 Austin Energy Green Building-rated commercial/multi-family buildings.
- Mueller builders have diverted more than 63,000 tons of construction debris away from landfills.
- Mueller multi-family buildings are saving an estimated 26 percent on their indoor water use with commercial buildings saving an estimated 32 percent.
- Through a partnership with [Pecan Street, Inc.](#) and Austin Energy, Mueller has hundreds of residential rooftop solar panels and electric vehicles.
- Mueller uses native and adapted plants that require less water in all commercial, residential and park landscaping, disallows plants designated as invasive species, and is one of the first Austin neighborhoods to use the Austin Water utility's "[purple pipe](#)" reclaimed water system, projected to offset more than 100 million gallons of potable water annually at final build-out.
- The onsite Mueller Energy Center, a highly efficient combined heat and power system, converts "waste heat" into free energy in the form of chilled water to fulfill Dell Children's and other nearby businesses energy requirements.
- The former airport, with its few trees, is being transformed into an urban tree canopy as 15,000 trees will be introduced by completion, including more than 500 native pecan trees rescued from a nearby county and transplanted into Mueller open spaces.
- Of its planned 140 acres of parks and open space that mitigate urban heat island, Mueller already has more than 50 percent (approximately 80 acres) completed.
- Austin's largest public art project, "[SunFlowers-An Electric Garden](#)," is a collection of 15 blue metal sculptures varying in height from 18 to 24 feet along Mueller's western edge at Interstate 35 that collect solar energy by day and light up at night and return excess solar energy to the grid.

"Mueller's LEED ND Stage 3 Gold Certification is a true testimony to Austin's commitment to environmental leadership, innovation, and community health," said Debbie Kimberly, Austin Energy's vice president of Customer Energy Solutions. "It's a great example of how we all benefit when Austin Energy, the City of Austin and a committed developer such as Catellus partner around sustainability. Austin Energy is inspired by, and proud to be part of the redevelopment effort that has earned this honor."

"Mueller has become the standard-bearer for sustainable development in Central Texas," said Austin Mayor Steve Adler. "From the beginning, the City of Austin and Mueller's neighbors were instrumental in the creation of the Mueller master plan, making sustainability a primary goal of the airport's redevelopment. Everyone involved, including [Austin Energy](#) Green Building, who established Mueller as a center for excellent and efficient design, should be proud of their role in earning this important distinction for Mueller and the City."



“It’s incredibly rewarding to know how Mueller’s sustainability achievements matter to the overall health of the community,” said Greg Weaver, executive vice president for Catellus. “The collaboration of our development partners and the experts, both consultants and Austin Energy, has revealed creative ways to implement environmental building and sustainability practices consistently — and at a large scale — demonstrating what can truly be achieved.”

LEED was developed by USGBC, whose mission is to promote sustainability focused practices in the building and construction industry, and is certified by GBCI. LEED ND integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into the first national system for neighborhood design. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a development's location and design meet accepted high levels of environmentally responsible, sustainable development. LEED ND is a collaboration among USGBC, the Congress for the New Urbanism and the Natural Resources Defense Council. For more information about USGBC’s LEED ND program, click [here](#).

About Mueller: Mueller is one of the nation’s most notable new-urbanist communities located in the heart of Austin. The 700-acre site of Austin’s former airport is being transformed into a diverse, sustainable, compatible, revitalizing and fiscally responsible master-planned community. Mueller is taking shape as a joint project between the City of Austin [Economic Development](#) department and Catellus Development over 10-15 years following nearly 20 years of extensive citizen input. Upon completion, Mueller will feature at least 5,900 single-family and multi-family homes, a mixed-use town center district known as [Aldrich Street](#), 4.4 million square feet of prime commercial space, including 750,000 square feet of local and regional retail space, 140 acres of parks and open space, plus Dell Children’s Medical Center, the Austin Film Studios, The Thinkery, H-E-B and the Austin ISD Performing Arts Center. For more information, visit www.MuellerAustin.com, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

About Catellus: Catellus is a national leader in mixed-use development, solving some of America’s most complex land challenges. With nearly 30 years of experience as a master developer, Catellus has transformed former airports, military bases and urban industrial sites into thriving retail, residential and commercial communities. These projects, which often include substantial public amenities, add economic, social and environmental value to the communities they serve. Catellus has both the financial strength and development expertise to turn vision into reality at even the most demanding development sites. For more information, visit www.catellus.com.

About the City of Austin, Economic Development Department – Redevelopment: The City’s Economic Development Department develops and leads the innovative programs that increase the prosperity of Austin’s citizens, our businesses and our diverse neighborhoods. With a focus on regenerating key assets of the city, Economic Development has implemented catalyst redevelopment projects, including the Seaholm District, Second Street Retail District and the Mueller Redevelopment, an award-winning national model for responsible urban planning and development. Visit www.austintexas.gov/edd.

About Austin Energy Green Building: Austin Energy® Green Building® (AEGB) is celebrating 25 years of leadership in green building. AEGB developed the first rating system in the U.S. to evaluate buildings sustainability, and created a model for many other cities, as well as the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED certification system. Today, AEGB continues to develop and support a rating system that helps Austin reach our local environmental and climate protection goals. The ratings pave the way for energy and building code advancement that reduce building energy use and create a continuous improvement cycle. Visit www.greenbuilding.austinenergy.com.

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