

## TEAM SNAPSHOT

# Austin, Texas



### GEORGE ADAMS

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW DEPARTMENT, CITY OF AUSTIN

*Neighborhood development experience* 12 years from both a regulatory and urban design perspective  
*I want to learn about* EcoDistrict benefits; particularly, how Portland tracks these benefits.  
*One challenge I'd like to address* measuring the performance of compact, mixed use development versus conventional development.



### LUCIA ATHENS LEED AP *team lead*

CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER, CITY OF AUSTIN

*Neighborhood development experience* Community master planning for a Seattle redevelopment, Yesler Terrace; will create a Green Alley demonstration project in East Austin's Guadalupe neighborhood  
*I want to learn about* tools for governance with multiple property owners, resources and concepts for educating and engaging residents and business owners.  
*One challenge I'd like to address* is how to bring together diverse players and interests to create synergy around the EcoDistricts concept, and increase commitment to sustainability overall.



### FRED EVINS

SEAHOLM DISTRICT REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT MANAGER, ECONOMIC GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT, CITY OF AUSTIN

*Neighborhood development experience* Registered architect; 8 years working on the public-private redevelopment of underutilized city-owned land in downtown Austin  
*I want to learn about* the EcoDistricts designation as well as its benefits and challenges.  
*One challenge I'd like to address* is how to bring independent property owners together to form an effective EcoDistrict.



### ROBERT HARRIS, FAIA, LEED AP

PARTNER, LAKE FLATO ARCHITECTS

*Neighborhood development experience* 25 years as an architect with planning and development projects at the community, neighborhood and project site levels  
*I want to learn about* navigating the wide range of issues that impact planning and design at the district scale, identifying opportunities where urban projects overlap and breaking boundaries between public projects that fragment decision-making.



### JOHN C. ROSATO

BOARD MEMBER, PRINCIPAL, SOUTHWEST STRATEGIES

*Neighborhood development experience* 30 years in commercial real estate; served as general partner in over 30 real estate partnerships; manages real estate acquisitions and leasing for Austin Travis County MHRM; managing partner of Seaholm  
*I want to learn about* what an EcoDistrict looks like.  
*One challenge I'd like to address* is how to find lenders who understand commercial restorations.

## PROJECT SNAPSHOT

# Seaholm District



The Seaholm District is a 16-acre redevelopment on the southwestern edge of downtown seeking LEED ND status, led by the City of Austin. At the site's heart is the historic and iconic Art Deco-style Seaholm Power Plant building, a decommissioned steam power plant that will undergo adaptive reuse to include major retail stores, restaurants, offices and a conference center. A new central library is being designed by Lake Flato Architects, and is slated for LEED Silver minimum in a new 200,000-square foot building. Other future development includes a hotel and 1,475 units of multi-family housing (apartments and condos). The project also includes multi-modal transportation; complete streets, a Metro Rail stop, bus transit, bike

sharing, car sharing, hike-and-bike trail connections and a five-mile cross-city route connecting with the Lance Armstrong Bikeway. Finally, Shoal Creek is a significant urban waterway that runs north-south through the city, culminating at Ladybird Lake. As such, stream bank restoration, habitat creation, native plantings and natural drainage are included in the plan. The project integrates benefits across the entire triple bottom line; it supports up to 2,000 jobs and integrates cultural facilities and significant art components. The ambitious plans complement Austin's successful policy and zoning efforts to bring more housing and commercial activity into the downtown area.

## Why this neighborhood?

The Seaholm District is one of the City of Austin's signature public/private partnership redevelopment projects located in the heart of the city, with maximum visibility and a very high level of financial, political and community support. Plans are underway to include a Sustainability Information Center that will serve as the green concierge for the entire site, and staff offices for the Office of Sustainability. While much of the overall site has been planned, there is ample opportunity for the EcoDistrict concept to inform many design decisions and plans for how the neighborhood will be managed.

### top 3 Neighborhood PRIORITIES:

1. Returning underutilized land to tax base while advancing urban design objectives, such as increasing downtown residential stock and retail offerings
2. Expanding transportation options while increasing walkability
3. Improving public assets (streetscapes, historic structures and natural green space)

### top 3 Neighborhood CHALLENGES:

1. Securing buy-in of multiple property owners
2. Identifying funds to support innovative district-wide sustainable design elements
3. Facing developer reluctance to design changes since most of the district's projects are currently in design phase