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2019 Austin Green Awards Celebration Recognizes Four Outstanding Projects

Celebrating Austin's Exemplary Green Buildings, Sites + Infrastructure

AUSTIN, Texas (November 7, 2019) – The four Awardees of the 2019 Austin Green Awards were announced at the **Austin Green Awards Celebration** on October 30th: Projects of the Year Texas Mutual Insurance Company Headquarters and Advanced Green Builder Demonstration, along with Mary Elizabeth Branch Park and UPCycle. Details on each are below.

In her welcome, Austin Energy Green Building's Sarah Talkington poignantly noted, "The Earth is nothing if not resilient. It is us humans that are relatively delicate: we require an atmosphere of breathable air, drinking water, and a very specific temperature range. The Earth will go on without us. It is human survival on this Earth that is threatened. The challenge we face is that the economy and Earth are less equitable for our most vulnerable people and communities. The projects we are celebrating tonight change what is possible, and help us establish a brand new status quo."

Ms. Talkington's remarks were followed by Travis County Commissioner Brigid Shea's compelling keynote, who engaged the audience: "So what do we know about what's headed our way in Central Texas? What do we need to be preparing for? As the people who are responsible for the design of our built environment, we're going to be looking for a lot of help!" Commissioner Shea closed with, "I believe in the power of human ingenuity. I believe we are wired for survival and that resilience is in our DNA. The challenge for your industry is to imagine, and design and create the cities of the future, with the full knowledge of what is coming."

Now in its fourth year, the **Austin Green Awards** is Austin's first recognition program to specifically highlight outstanding accomplishments in the broad arena of sustainable design and innovation, recognizing forward facing design strategies that respond to rapidly evolving environmental, social, and health imperatives. With a recognition of the opportunity for the Austin Green Awards to set a high bar for sustainable events, we set a goal for zero waste and achieved a 99% diversion.

Two of our 2019 Austin Green Award Judges, Ilse Frank and David Lake, presented this year's four awardees, including for the first time two Projects of the Year.

- **Project of the Year: Texas Mutual Insurance Company Headquarters** submitted by Studio 8 Architects; Owner: Texas Mutual. Underscoring this project was a commitment for the new headquarters to be more than just an



office building for employees, but as a community asset. Green concepts, health and well-being were significant considerations of the entire project.

Judges' Comments:

"It's difficult to pull off a building of this scale that is underpinned by impressive goals while aligning with financial and regulatory constraints of a standard office building. It provides a welcoming environment to occupants, and speaks to the broader Mueller development in terms of community connectivity, varying scales, and, importantly, animating the park."

"The project combines impressive energy performance along with skillful integration of visible elements, such as the prominent shading devices, that bring attention to what makes the building work."

- **Project of The Year: Advanced Green Builder Demonstration**, by Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems; Owner: Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems. This project was conceived as a bold manifestation of a fundamental rethink of the way buildings are designed, construction and operated, with six visionary protocols used as the overarching framework: ecobalance, biophilia, flexible building systems, visible green, low carbon/embodied energy and life cycle design.

Judges' Comments:

"This is a small scale, inspirational, beautiful building, intrinsically connected to the region. It meets all the benchmarks, backed up with performance metrics, and provides an accessible, public model of how to build in the region."

"This 21-year old building hits all the marks. It is designed for place, ecology and is more advanced than most contemporary projects. Pretty spectacular."

- **Mary Elizabeth Branch Park**, submitted by Design Workshop; Owner: Catellus Development Corporation. The 3.5-acre park was designed to accommodate the various recreation needs of a mixed-use, multi-generational community. The landscape throughout the park aims to provide variety, habitat, shade, temporal interest and a sense of being surrounded by nature.

Judges' Comments:

"The park is an impressive example of scaling between different land uses, quickly establishing itself as an iconic community asset attracting people of all ages from Mueller and beyond."

"Impressive integration of multiple, compelling story lines of the appropriate plant species, water cycle and conscientious water use, cultural history, and thoughtful material selection."

- **UPcycle**, submitted by Gensler; Owner: EverWest Real Estate Partners. Positioned at the heart of vibrant East Austin, an old single-story warehouse was converted into creative office, and reincarnated as a vibrant neighborhood hub. Built in 1972, the 65,000 square foot warehouse's unique appearance was preserved while transforming the structure into a modern space optimized for collaboration.



Judges' Comments:

"A terrific example of adaptive reuse, activating an existing building for contemporary use, in a location with proximity to transit and other community amenities."

"The carbon that went into producing this industrial building—already used in the original materials, transportation, construction-and other existing structures of aesthetic, cultural, functional worth, updates the preservation story for our times of catastrophic climate change. Our old buildings, reborn, also add texture and character to the mammoth modernism of bland cityscapes."

Four prominent local and nationally recognized designers judged this year's **Austin Green Awards**:

- **Ilse Frank, ASLA, Associate AIA**, Founding Principal of Studio Balcones *Austin* – Ilse investigates projects through cross platform methodologies of architecture, landscape architecture, and city and regional planning.
- **David Lake, FAIA**, Founding Partner of Lake|Flato Architects *Austin + San Antonio* – Over the past 30 years, David has earned national recognition for designs that draw on cultural and architectural traditions, adapt to climate, and fit gently into the landscape.
- **Kate Simonen, AIA, SE**, Founding Director of Carbon Leadership Forum *Seattle* – Kate is an Associate Professor at the University of Washington, a writer, and a researcher with significant professional experience in high performance buildings, architecture and structural engineering.
- **Susan S. Szenasy**, Director of Design Innovation *Metropolis Magazine*, Historian + Educator *New York* – From 1985 to 2017, Susan was Editor in Chief and Publisher of *Metropolis*, and a guiding light behind its digital platforms and live events.

Sponsors of the 2019 **Austin Green Awards** are Headline Sponsor Austin Energy Green Building, and Leadership Circle Sponsors Integral Group, Walter P Moore, Glumac, Page/, Structurlam, Niagara, and Encotech. Additional sponsors are Martinez Moore Engineers, Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems, Architectural Engineers Collaborative, Asakura Robinson, Lake | Flato Architects, dwg., City of Austin Office of Sustainability, Prosoco, and Barley|Pfeiffer Architecture.

Details about the 2020 **Austin Green Awards** will be announced in Spring 2020. For more information, go to www.atxgreenawards.org, email info@atxgreenawards.org, or follow us on our social media Twitter (@atxgreenawards) and Instagram (atxgreenawards).

The **Austin Green Awards** is conceived and convened as a personal initiative of Travis Albrecht, AIA of Gensler; Dirk Kestner, P.E. of Walter P Moore; Bungane Mehloakulu, P.E. of Integral Group; Gail Vittori, Co-Director of Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems; with generous assistance from Kristine Walker and Kyle Dunning. The Center for Maximum Potential Building Systems serves as fiscal sponsor.

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