

AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION

# APWA



Texas Chapter

## IN THE NEWS

### Austin Public Works Achieves 2nd American Public Works Association Re-Accreditation, First Time Joined by Multiple City of Austin Departments

Participating in the APWA Accreditation Program is an opportunity for agencies to earn an accreditation after an evaluation and thorough review process. This program is a means of formally verifying and recognizing public works agencies for compliance with the recommended practices set forth in the Public Works Management Practices Manual.

The City of Austin Public Works Department (PWD) received its first APWA Accreditation in 2015, re-accreditation in 2019, and its second re-accreditation in 2023. Undergoing this process has helped the department enhance the quality of its public works services through rigorous self-assessment and process improvements. The program has helped promote

a culture of continuous advancement, fostering collaboration and sharing of best practices within and with partner departments.

Historically, the Public Works Department approached the accreditation program as a singular agency. Two years before the recent re-accreditation, PWD began meeting with potential partner departments to demonstrate the benefits of accreditation, the level of effort required and to gauge their interest in joining the journey.

This re-accreditation was unique because PWD embarked on its journey alongside various City departments who would receive a courtesy review of their functional chapters (Chapters focused

on the agency's core functions). The Public Works Department was joined by five City of Austin departments: Austin Resource Recovery, Austin Transportation, Building Services, Fleet Mobility Services, and Watershed Protection.

Throughout the re-accreditation process, all six departments met on a regular basis to discuss their progress, ask questions, and share helpful tools and resources. All partner departments participated in a thorough Quality Control review of all their chapter documentation and participated in a simulated mock Evaluation to prepare them for the re-accreditation evaluation in July 2023.

"Our teams are not just dedicated to providing a transportation network that

is well-built and well-maintained, but they are committed to meeting the highest standards set forth for public works organizations," said Richard Mendoza, Director of Austin Transportation and Public Works Department.

APWA Evaluators concluded that the Public Works Department achieved full compliance and recommended re-accreditation to the council. All partner departments' functional chapters were found to be in full compliance by APWA standards. This multi-departmental effort was monumental in building stronger partnerships with public works agencies within the City of Austin.



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