



# LEVERAGING SUCCESS

## BEYOND ENERGY & WATER SAVINGS

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



# 2015 was all about creating and sharing strategic tools to overcome common sustainability program challenges.

Expanding upon its success since launching in 2011, the Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge (ABBC) experienced another banner year in 2015.

ABBC partners developed several valuable tools to maximize the program's impacts. The Program overcame challenges that ranged from trying to manage massive amounts of data, to maintaining participants' enthusiasm and efforts towards energy and water savings goals. As ABBC moved through each challenge, program partners focused on creating tools that would help others on a similar journey to sustainability – whether through the Better Buildings Challenge or through other resource efficiency efforts.

The tools that have been created and shared help raise Atlanta's profile as a sustainability leader, support the City's efforts, and give ABBC a life beyond the end of the Challenge in 2020. These tools are adaptable, user-friendly, and can be used for years to come to support sustainability and resource efficiency efforts in Atlanta's commercial built environment and beyond. Tools launched in 2015 help Atlanta and the ABBC tell their story around:



**DATA  
DELIVERY**



**ECONOMIC  
IMPACT**



**MOMENTUM &  
MOTIVATION**



**SHARING  
SUCCESS**

## In 2015, Atlanta successfully:

### **ACHIEVED A 22% WATER SAVINGS,**

exceeding its 20% water savings goal for the program five years early.

### **REACHED A TOTAL OF OVER 100 MILLION SQUARE FEET**

of building space committed to the Challenge.

### **CONTINUED ITS MOMENTUM**

towards reaching the 20% energy savings goal, growing its total energy savings to 15.9%.

### **DEVELOPED MULTIPLE TOOLS AND BEST PRACTICES**

critical to overcoming program challenges, and offered them to other organizations and cities to use.

“Through the Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge, my Office of Sustainability has partnered with businesses and non-profit organizations to implement a comprehensive program for Downtown buildings to meet the goal of improving energy performance a minimum of 20 percent by 2020. With more than 100 million square feet of building space now committed to the Challenge, Atlanta has earned its place as a national leader. Our continued work with the Better Buildings Challenge and our partners is an essential step toward meeting our goal of making Atlanta a top-tier sustainable city.”

– Mayor Kasim Reed



143 MILLION  
GALLONS  
OF WATER  
SAVED  
TO DATE



85,992  
METRIC TONS  
OF CO<sub>2</sub>e  
AVOIDED  
TO DATE



2.2 BILLION  
kBtuS  
OF ENERGY  
SAVED  
TO DATE





## DATA DELIVERY

# Our Data Dashboard communicates large amounts of data in a user friendly way.

After four years of recruiting and engaging with Challenge participants, ABBC has collected mountains of data. This data needed to be managed and shared to communicate program information and progress towards success while being visual, easy to understand and easy to access.

The Dashboard provides energy use intensity data, ENERGY STAR® scores, and energy and water savings by participant property type. It provides data on square footage committed to the Challenge as well as the year built and property use. Data is broken into four easy-to-understand categories – participation, benchmarking, energy and water.

The Data Dashboard is used by the City and ABBC participants to track overall progress of the Challenge. Because of their work in creating the data, Atlanta was asked by the Department of Energy to be a partner in its Energy Data Accelerator program, focused on demonstrating streamlined, best-practice approaches to providing energy data for the purpose of whole building energy performance benchmarking.

### Visit our dashboard

[abbcdata.com](http://abbcdata.com)

*"The data dashboard illustrates the success of ABBC and is an important resource for the Atlanta Community to see the impact of their investments and for cities everywhere to visualize the opportunity for their own communities."*

Dennis Creech,  
Executive Director,  
Southface Energy Institute



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## ECONOMIC IMPACT

# Our tool allows us to precisely calculate the positive economic development influence of the work we are doing.

ABBC could anecdotally see that the work being done through the Challenge was having a positive economic impact on Atlanta, creating and supporting jobs in energy and water efficiency year after year. ABBC and its partners saw value in working to quantify that impact, and needed a tool to help them do that.

ABBC and its partners joined together to create the Economic Impact Model. This tool uses the IMPLAN modeling system to calculate the economic impact of energy efficiency work in jobs created, total labor income and economic growth per unit of investment. The resulting study, conducted in collaboration with the City of Atlanta Office of Sustainability, Southface Energy Institute, Central Atlanta Progress and Invest Atlanta, showed that investment in energy efficiency produces more jobs, total labor income and economic growth per unit of investment than solar energy, power generation or the rest of other sectors of goods and services within the economy. This demonstrates the value of the impact the Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge has on the City and its economic development now and into the future.

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*"The Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge has been a valuable asset to the City not only in terms of resource conservation but also in economic impact. Developing a tool to calculate this impact is a project that Invest Atlanta was excited to support and will continue to use for many years to come."*

Eloisa Klementich,  
President & CEO,  
Invest Atlanta



## MOMENTUM & MOTIVATION

# Connecting participants with vendors and technologies that meet their needs encouraged project implementation.

With over 100 million square feet committed to the Challenge, ABBC recognized the importance of keeping participants motivated and moving towards project implementation. The key to motivation is making sure the participants have a vision of success and are connected to the implementers who can complete the needed work.

To address this challenge, ABBC held an Expo Event in the Summer of 2015 at the Atlanta Botanical Garden to connect participants and service providers and highlight new innovations. The Showcase Project for the Department of Energy was also updated so local participants had a more up-to-date example of success in Atlanta to keep them working towards their own success.

Two new participants joined the Challenge at the Expo Event – MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) and the Atlanta Botanical Garden, demonstrating the impact of the event and the continued growth of ABBC.

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*“The 2015 ABBC expo was purposeful and professional. The event enabled us to present our solution to a captive audience. I look forward to next year’s event!”*

Chad Gilpin,  
Sales Director,  
Goby LLC



## SHARING SUCCESS

# Our implementation model provides the framework and tools any organization or city would need to replicate our success.

Success often brings its own unique challenges – and the ABBC was no exception. Thanks to ABBC’s own successes, along with DOE recognition as a Challenge leader, program administrators have fielded a flood of inquiries from other cities asking for advice and guidance on how they could implement their own resource efficiency efforts. ABBC wanted to be able to share the practices and techniques they had used in their effort as well as sharing lessons learned along the way. The result was the ABBC Implementation Model.

The Implementation Model is user-friendly and module based toolkit that any municipality or district can use to replicate Atlanta’s success in implementing a resource efficiency effort. Model users can pick and choose the modules that best apply to their effort, resulting in a customized approach for each user. This start-to-finish map is practical and highlights Atlanta’s success in developing a process for collaboration and engagement across diverse stakeholder groups that results in program success.

### View our model

[atlantabbcc.com/  
implementationmodel](https://atlantabbcc.com/implementationmodel)

*"The Implementation Model allows ABBC to share the best practices and lessons learned that have led to our success. We are excited to be able to provide this insight to other cities or organizations who may be just starting on their journey to sustainability."*

AJ Robinson,  
President, CAP/ADID





The Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge was launched in June 2011 as an inaugural project of President Obama and the Department of Energy's Better Building Challenge program. Competing with other cities across the country, Atlanta's goal is to reduce energy and water consumption in participating buildings by 20% by 2020.

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