HUSCH BLACKWELL

CASE STUDY

Harris County Sports & Convention Corporation

HOUSTON, TXOVERVIEW

Harris County—the largest county in Texas and third-largest county in the U.S.—recently embarked on a monumental Climate Action Plan aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030. A significant step in the plan concerned upgrades to county facilities, including NRG Park, a 350-acre sports and entertainment complex housing NRG Stadium, home of the Houston Rodeo and the NFL's Houston Texans and hosting over 500 events and 5.5 million people annually. The county leases NRG Park to Harris County Sports & Convention Corporation (HCSCC), which operates as NRG Park's landlord. Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and in need of upgrades to the park's central plant; building automation systems; and controls, water conservation, lighting, and life safety systems, HCSCC looked to tackle its infrastructure needs while finding the most fiscally and environmentally sustainable solution.

Challenges

While there are always many considerations when renovating a large facility, HCSCC sought to make sure the upgrades were aligned with Harris County's emissions targets while staying within budgets during a period of price volatility and inflation across the construction industry.

Solution

Industry

Real Estate, Development, & Construction

Services

Arena & Stadium Development

Public Law

Legal Team

Sandy Hellums-Gomez

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HCSCC enlisted Husch Blackwell to negotiate a historic energy savings performance contract with Johnson Controls International (JCI) in which JCI will retrofit NRG Park's facilities to make NRG Park more energy efficient.

JCI will also integrate its OpenBlue Central Utility Plant to optimize energy usage at the park. Through this collaboration, HCSCC will reduce the county's carbon dioxide emissions by more than 241,000 metric tons annually, marking a significant contribution to the county's lofty Climate Action Plan.

Result

The 20-year energy savings performance contract will fund the entire cost of the complex-wide upgrades through generated savings, as well as provide a surplus to be reinvested back into the community. By focusing on energy-efficient equipment and economic costs, this collaboration will also significantly reduce carbon emissions to support the goals of the Climate Action Plan. With Husch Blackwell's guidance, HCSCC is leading the country in creative funding solutions and energy efficiency at one of the nation's busiest sports and entertainment complexes.

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