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How Austin landed the Apple deal

It takes a village to build a tech hub

By [Cindy Widner](#) | [@CurbedAustin](#) | Dec 14, 2018, 12:56pm CST



Courtesy of Apple

Inexpensive talent, an abundance of land, and a low cost of living—all of those things being relative to, say, Silicon Valley—were likely the main drivers behind Apple’s decision, announced Thursday, to expand its Austin presence significantly with a new \$1 billion facility. Nevertheless, the kinds of incentives often crucial to luring big tech, while not on par with the sometimes ludicrous lures cast by some cities in hopes of landing [Amazon’s HQ2](#), are not completely absent from the deal.

While the 2012 deal for the first Austin Apple campus involved the commitment of an estimated [\\$36 million in combined incentives](#) from the state, Travis County, and the city, according to the *Austin American-Statesman*, the new campus will receive no financial incentives from the city of Austin.

That doesn't mean taxpayer money isn't involved, however. The company is set to receive up to \$25 million in taxpayer-funded grants from the state's [Texas Enterprise Fund](#), which offers companies incentives to close deals on major projects in the state, the *Statesman* reported. TEC funds, which are currently controlled by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, are allocated based on a formula involving investment and job creation at the site.



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In addition, according to a Friday *Community Impact* story, Apple is seeking a 15-year [property tax abatement](#) from Williamson County, which encompasses part of North Austin, including the area where the campus will be located. Under the agreement being considered, *CI* reported, the county would abate or reimburse 65 percent of its taxes for 15 years in exchange for Apple's \$400 million purchase of the land, development of the campus, and the creation of 4,000 new jobs.

- [Apple plans \\$1 billion new campus, 5,000 more jobs](#) [AAS]
- [Williamson County pursuing 15-year incentive deal for new Apple campus in Austin](#) [CI]