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**DOWNTOWN
AUSTIN ALLIANCE**
Annual Report



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**DOWN
AUSTIN TOWN
ALLIANCE**



Table of CONTENTS

6 Letter from the Board Chair

7 Letter from the President and CEO

01 ABOUT THE DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE 8
 Our Membership 8
 Strategic Plan 2013-2018 10

02 THE STATE OF DOWNTOWN 12
 Emerging Development Projects 12
 Development Potential 16
 Office Market 18
 Residential Market 20
 Hotel Market 22
 Retail Market 24

03 DOWNTOWN AUSTIN VISION: SHAPING OUR FUTURE 26

04 PLANNING DOWNTOWN: DISTRICTS, STREETS & PLACES 32
 Master Plans and Other Long-Term Initiatives 34
 Spotlight: Innovation District 36
 Spotlight: Our Congress Avenue 38
 Transforming Congress Avenue 40

05 IMPROVING MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE 42
 Spotlight: Downtown Parking Strategy 46

06 CREATING A SAFE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT 48

07 ENHANCING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES 50
 Spotlight: Downtown Parks and Public Realm 52
 Spotlight: Republic Square 54

08 ENGAGING THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY 56
 Advocacy 56
 Communications 60

09 FINANCIAL REPORTS 62

10 DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE TEAM 64
 Board and Advisory Board | Staff 64



Letter from the BOARD CHAIR

6

At the Downtown Austin Alliance, we're dedicated to preserving and enhancing the value and vitality of downtown Austin. That takes vision—the ability to see what we want downtown to look like and what actions will get us there. It also takes hours of hard work—from washing sidewalks and trimming trees to building consensus and advocating for change.

I am enormously proud of our board and staff's tireless service to our downtown community, which this year culminated in the reopening of Republic Square. The Downtown Alliance partnered with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department and Austin Parks Foundation to complete Republic Square's renovation. We are continuing this work by managing the park's daily operations and activating the space through food service and a full calendar of programming and community events. This historic green space was identified as a central gathering place in the 1800s, and we are excited to restore its status for generations to come.

As more people live, play, work and invest downtown, our Downtown Ambassadors are ensuring the area is clean and welcoming. All day, every day, our Ambassadors are cleaning streets, directing visitors and partnering with Austin Police Department to address safety issues. In 2017, the Ambassadors logged more than 166,000 daily activities and interactions, enabling us to

make data-driven decisions about how to best serve downtown.

Our data collection, along with our daily work with members and partners, also helps us shape policy. In 2017, we continued our involvement in CodeNEXT, the City of Austin's multiyear initiative to revise the land development code. Over the past two years we've conducted extensive research, including focus groups with downtown developers and professionals, and provided code recommendations that would support the downtown community's vision for Austin's urban core.

We also continued advocating for solutions to help people travel in, out and around downtown. MoPac's new managed lanes have opened the highway to Capital Metro bus routes, and we support adding managed lanes to I-35 and lowering the highway through downtown. We are proud of our work to gather and share the public's support of the plan.

We incorporate community engagement into nearly all of our initiatives. One of our largest campaigns this year was for the Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative in partnership with the City of Austin. We gathered public input about the future development of Congress Avenue. Transforming the "Main Street of Texas" into a world-class avenue will take vision and hard work—two things the Downtown Alliance and its partners have in abundance.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as Downtown Alliance Board Chair. I am honored to have served with and learned from the city's most dedicated leaders from the public and private sectors. It is this type of collaboration that makes downtown Austin a truly special place to be.

Sincerely,

Carol Polumbo
2017/2018 BOARD CHAIR
Downtown Austin Alliance



Letter from the PRESIDENT AND CEO

7

Wherever Austinites gather, from parties to playgrounds, break rooms to bus stops, our city's growth has become as common a conversation topic as the weather. Behind this small talk are big opportunities and big challenges. Growth has brought an influx of diverse, exciting new ideas and attractions to our city. Yet growth is also straining our infrastructure—and many residents' wallets.

These issues are especially visible in downtown Austin, where the rapidly changing skyline marks our pace of progress. The Downtown Austin Alliance's analysis shows downtown has the capacity to more than double in size. So how do we promote investment and innovation downtown while preserving the area's unique heritage? Downtown is the economic, governmental and cultural hub of Central Texas—and an international destination—so how do we keep it affordable, accessible and appealing to all?

At the Downtown Alliance, we think that if downtown Austin is to remain accessible to everyone, then everyone should have a voice in shaping its future. That's why we spent 2017 leading an extensive community engagement campaign to develop a vision for downtown's future. Through workshops, focus groups, surveys and public art projects, we asked Austinites of all ages and backgrounds what they wanted downtown to look like in 10-15 years. It was especially important for us to involve not just downtown residents

and employees, but also people who come to downtown rarely or occasionally.

As we celebrate the Downtown Alliance's 25th year, we are proud to unveil our community's collective vision for downtown. We will use it to guide our daily work as we collaborate with property owners, residents, business owners, community organizations and government entities on initiatives to shape our urban core.

Making downtown a welcoming and inviting place for everyone is a key focus area. We must make sure people of all income levels can continue enjoying downtown. We must also protect our most vulnerable residents—men and women who are chronically homeless. This year, the Downtown Alliance made a leadership capital campaign pledge of \$2 million over the next 10 years to support the next phases of Mobile Loaves & Fishes' Community First! Village. This grant is the largest in our history, and the largest ever for Mobile Loaves & Fishes.

As we grow, we must balance the glass and steel of new high-rises with the heart and soul of public spaces. The newly opened Republic Square, which the Downtown Alliance now manages and programs through a public-private partnership, provides a blueprint for bringing the community more opportunities for respite and recreation. We look forward to working with our partners to create a network of welcoming, connected and engaging parks and public places that envelop downtown.



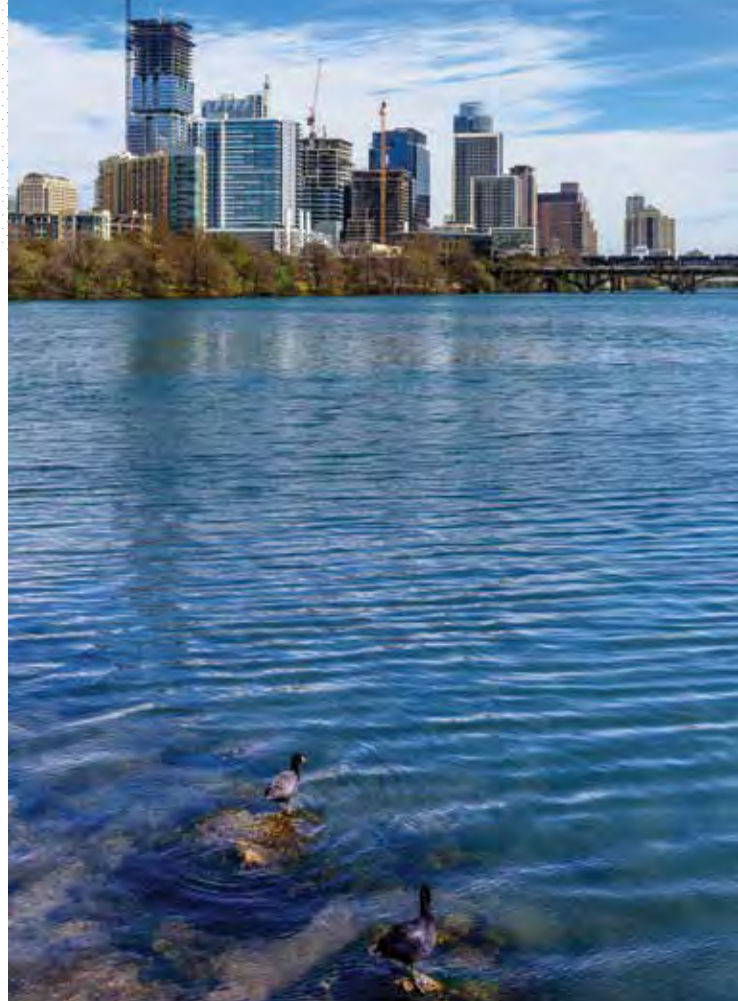
Lastly, as we help shape emerging neighborhoods and districts, as we're doing with Capital City Innovation in the Innovation District, we must improve mobility. While we continue to champion the lowering of I-35 through downtown, more lanes are only part of the solution. We will continue working with Movability to make downtown the leader and champion of innovative transportation alternatives.

Turning vision into reality would not be possible without the support and guidance of our partners, members, board and staff. Thank you for your commitment to making downtown Austin a downtown we will always love.

Sincerely,

Dewitt Peart
PRESIDENT AND CEO
Downtown Austin Alliance

About the DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE



Our Membership

WHO WE ARE

The Downtown Austin Alliance is a nonprofit organization that works with property owners, residents, business owners, community organizations and government entities to advance our collective vision for the future of downtown Austin.

As a leader and full-time advocate for downtown, the Downtown Alliance takes an active role in planning decisions that increase the area's economic prosperity. We also partner with key stakeholders in the public and private sectors on dozens of projects to enhance downtown's appeal to businesses, residents and visitors. Additionally, through our Downtown Ambassador program we provide direct services that make downtown a cleaner, safer and more welcoming place.

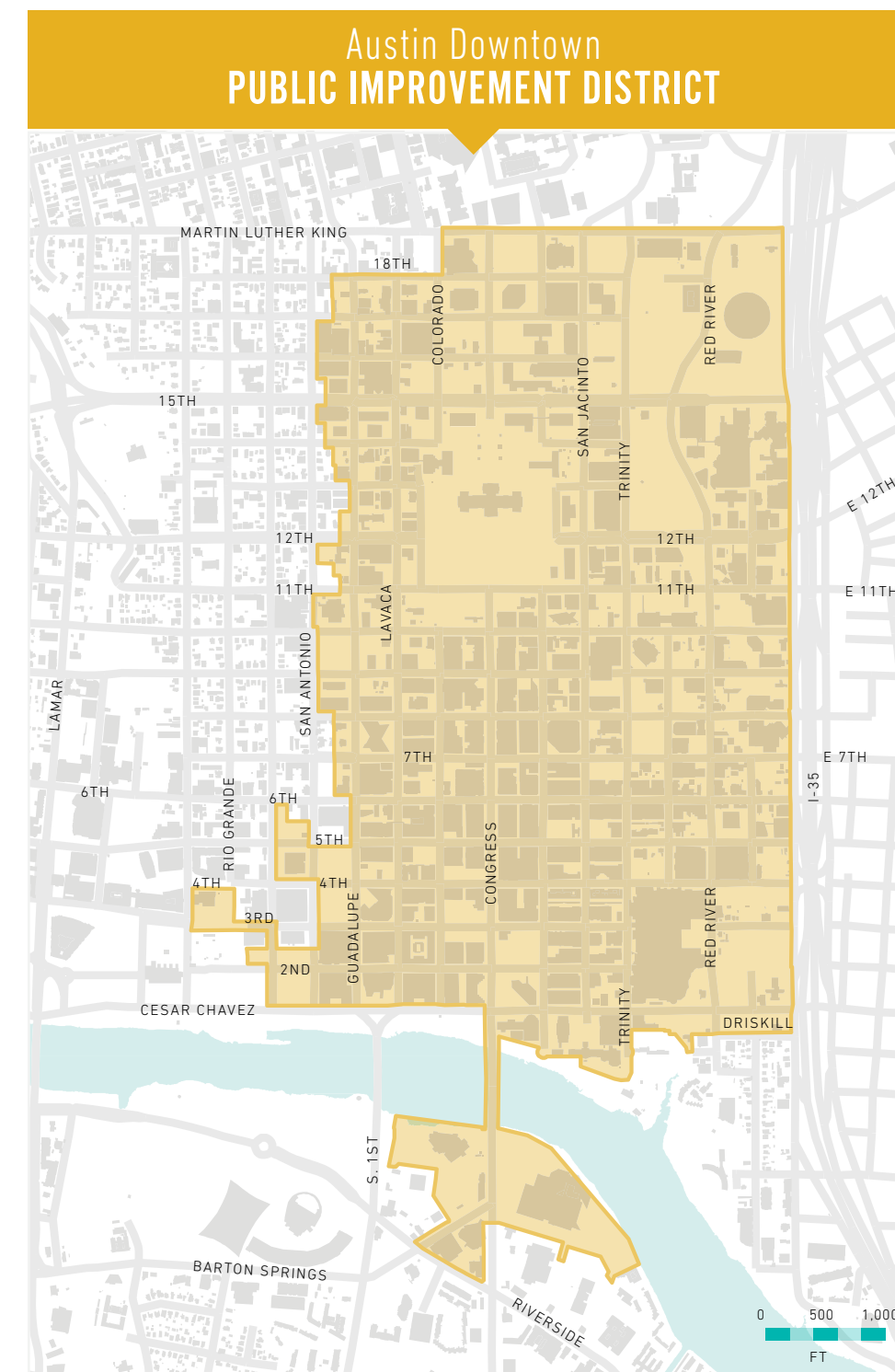
The Downtown Alliance's volunteer board, committees and partners join our organization's full-time staff in its

daily work to preserve and enhance the value and vitality of downtown Austin.

FUNDING AND MEMBERSHIP

In 1993, downtown property owners petitioned the City of Austin to create a Public Improvement District (PID) to address the unique needs of downtown Austin. The PID is currently authorized through 2023. The Downtown Alliance's funding comes primarily from a special assessment on large, privately owned properties within the PID at 10 cents per \$100 after the first \$500,000 in value.

Owners of downtown property valued over \$500,000 automatically become assessed members of the Downtown Alliance, and any other Austin organizations or individuals are welcome to join our organization as associate or voluntary members.



Below: Fairmont Austin

Above: Downtown skyline from Lou Neff Point, Zilker Park

Strategic Plan 2013-2018

The Downtown Austin Alliance's mission and vision guide our work as we think about the downtown we want to create for future generations. Our strategic priorities reflect the areas where we can effect the most change and best serve our membership. As we conclude the final year of our 2013-2018 strategic plan, we are pleased to reflect on the progress we've made.

We also look forward to launching a new strategic plan informed by the greater Austin community's feedback in the Downtown Austin Vision process.

OUR MISSION

To preserve and enhance the value and vitality of downtown Austin.



Left: Butterfly Bridge and Austin's Central Library;
Right: Foreground at One Eleven



OUR VISION:

Downtown is the heart and soul of Texas. It's:

- a welcoming community where our unique past, present and future meet and mingle on every street and corner
- a thriving business, government, education and residential center
- an accessible gathering place, easy to reach and enticing to explore for locals and tourists alike
- the community's cultural hub, where art and music dance and play
- a place where nature's beauty beckons — to calm, surprise and delight
- a prosperous place, environmentally and economically healthy and sustainable
- a vibrant neighborhood of suits and boots, strollers and sneakers, bats and Birkenstocks

OUR IMPERATIVES:

Two imperatives guide the work we do at the Downtown Alliance to advance our strategic priorities. First, we are committed to the economic prosperity of downtown Austin. Second, we provide leadership to the downtown community as we work together to shape the area's future.

Strategic PRIORITIES

1

DOWNTOWN DRAWS PEOPLE:

Make downtown Austin readily accessible by a variety of effective, efficient and pleasant transportation options. The existing system is inadequate, limiting access and therefore downtown's economic potential.

2

DOWNTOWN CAPTIVATES PEOPLE:

Ensure that downtown Austin is a more enticing place — clean, safe and beautiful. Cleanliness and safety are prerequisites, but to grow its competitive advantage among Austin neighborhoods and downtowns around the country the area must also become more beautiful, active and welcoming.

3

CONGRESS AVENUE WOWS PEOPLE:

Transform what is now a street into a truly exceptional place — the greatest street in Austin and one of the great streets in the world. In recent years, the Main Street of Texas' vitality has improved but it is not yet optimized as the economic and cultural backbone of downtown.

4

HISTORIC SQUARES GATHER PEOPLE:

Establish a public-private partnership for Republic Square that will serve as a model in effectively implementing and sustaining the vision for Austin's urban squares. Great public spaces increase urban areas' appeal, livability and economic vitality, but downtown open spaces are underperforming.

The State of DOWNTOWN



Emerging Development Projects

DEVELOPMENTS COMPLETED IN 2017

- 1 908 NUECES CONDOMINIUMS (Nueces and 10th Streets)
Condo
- 2 ALOFT AND ELEMENT HOTELS (Congress Avenue and 7th Street)
Hotel, Restaurant
- 3 DELL SETON MEDICAL CENTER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS (15th and Red River Streets)
Medical
- 4 DELL MEDICAL HEALTH DISCOVERY BUILDING (Trinity Street)
Health

- 5 500 W. 2ND STREET (2nd and San Antonio Streets)
Office, Retail
- 6 HYATT HOUSE (9th and Neches Streets)
Hotel
- 7 NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY (Cesar Chavez Street)
Library
- 8 REPUBLIC SQUARE (4th and Guadalupe Streets)
Park
- 9 RISE ON 8TH (8th and Nueces Streets)
Apartment

- 10 THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN – JONES CENTER RENOVATION (7th Street and Congress Avenue)
Museum

- 11 SHOAL CREEK WALK BUILDING TWO (West 6th and Bowie Streets)
Office
- 12 UT SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (7th and Lavaca Streets)
Office

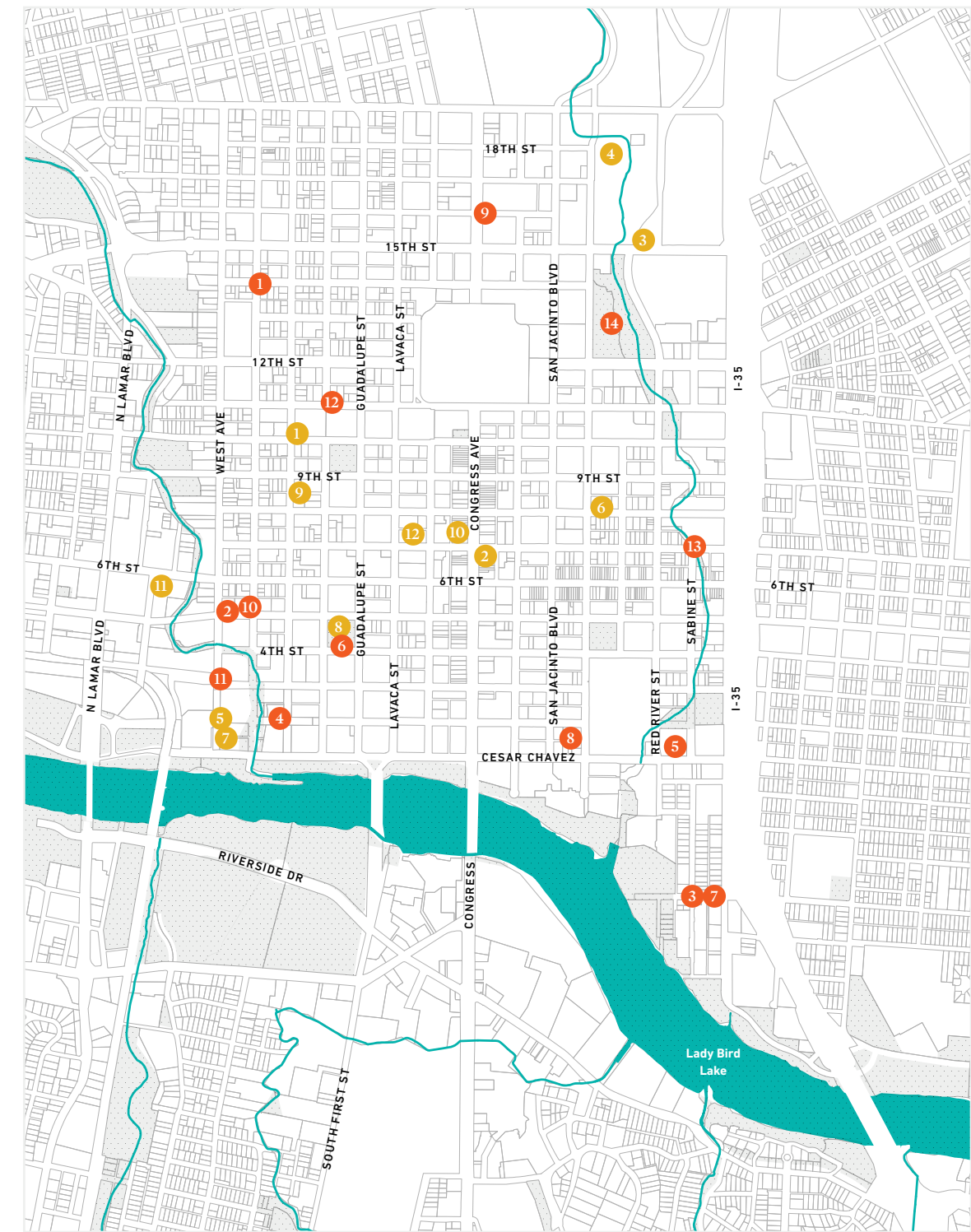
DEVELOPMENTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- 1 1306 WEST AVE (13th Street and West Avenue)
Condominium
- 2 5TH & WEST (5th Street and West Avenue)
Condominium

- 3 70 RAINEY STREET (Rainey Street)
Condominium
- 4 AUSTIN PROPER HOTEL & RESIDENCES (2nd and Nueces Streets)
Hotel, Condos
- 5 FAIRMONT AUSTIN (Red River and Cesar Chavez Streets)
Hotel
- 6 GABLES REPUBLIC SQUARE AND HOTEL ZAZA (4th and Guadalupe Streets)
Apartments, Hotel
- 7 HOMEWOOD SUITES BY HILTON AUSTIN DOWNTOWN (East Avenue)
Hotel

- 8 MARRIOTT HOTEL AT CESAR CHAVEZ (Cesar Chavez and Trinity Streets)
Hotel
- 9 STATE OFFICE BUILDING #1 (15th Street and Congress Avenue)
Office
- 10 THE INDEPENDENT (3rd Street)
Condos, Retail, Restaurant
- 11 THIRD + SHOAL (3rd Street and West Ave.)
Office
- 12 TRAVIS COUNTY RONNIE EARLE BUILDING (11th and San Antonio Streets)
Office, Retail
- 13 WALLER CREEK FLOOD DIVERSION TUNNEL (Waller Creek)
Infrastructure
- 14 WATERLOO PARK (12th and Trinity Streets)
Park

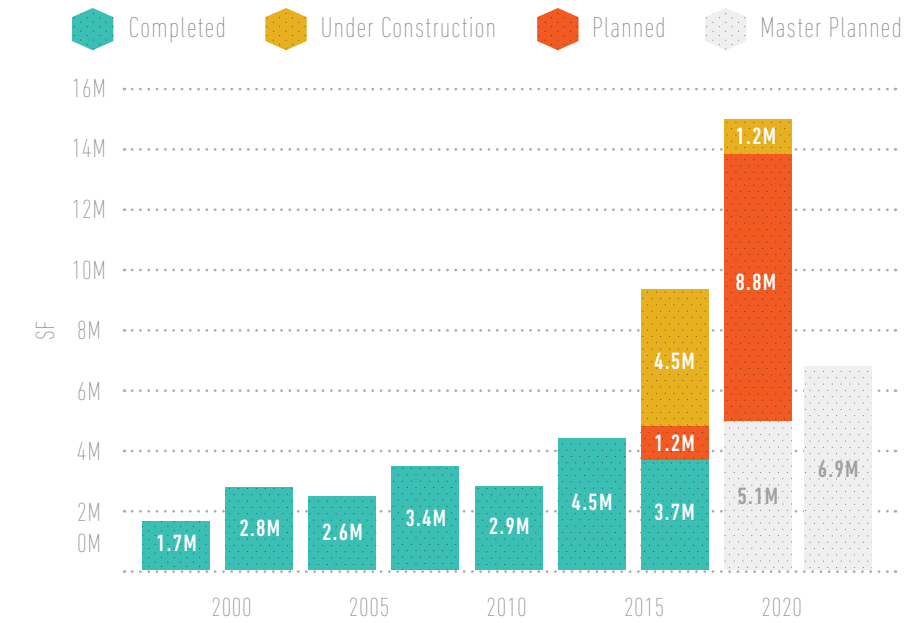
See full project details at downtownaustin.com/business/emergingprojects



Construction in the southwest corner of downtown. Photo by Austin Public Library



Downtown Development Since 1999



2017 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT by the Numbers

COMPLETED
11
 Projects
 2.6 M SF

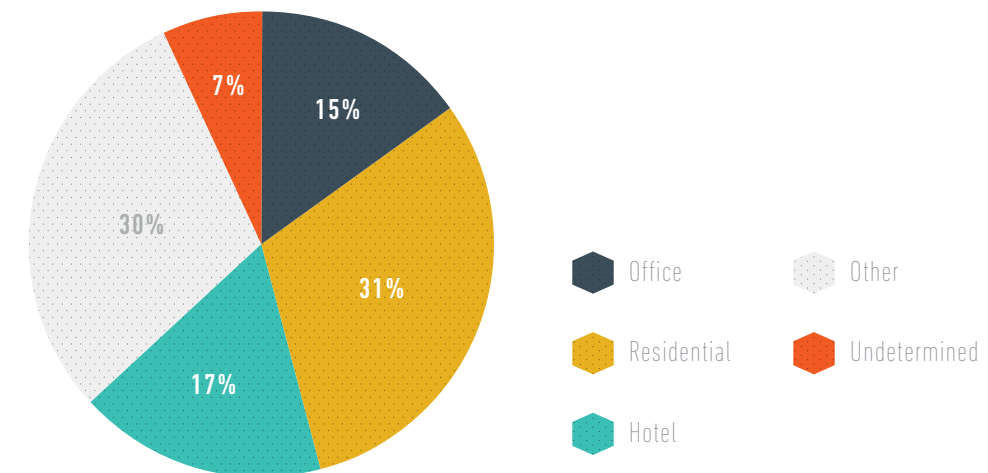
UNDER CONSTRUCTION
15
 Projects
 5.7 M SF

PLANNED
30
 Projects
 22 M SF

15

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT BY USE

Completed/Planned/Master Planned/Under Construction Since 1999



Development Potential

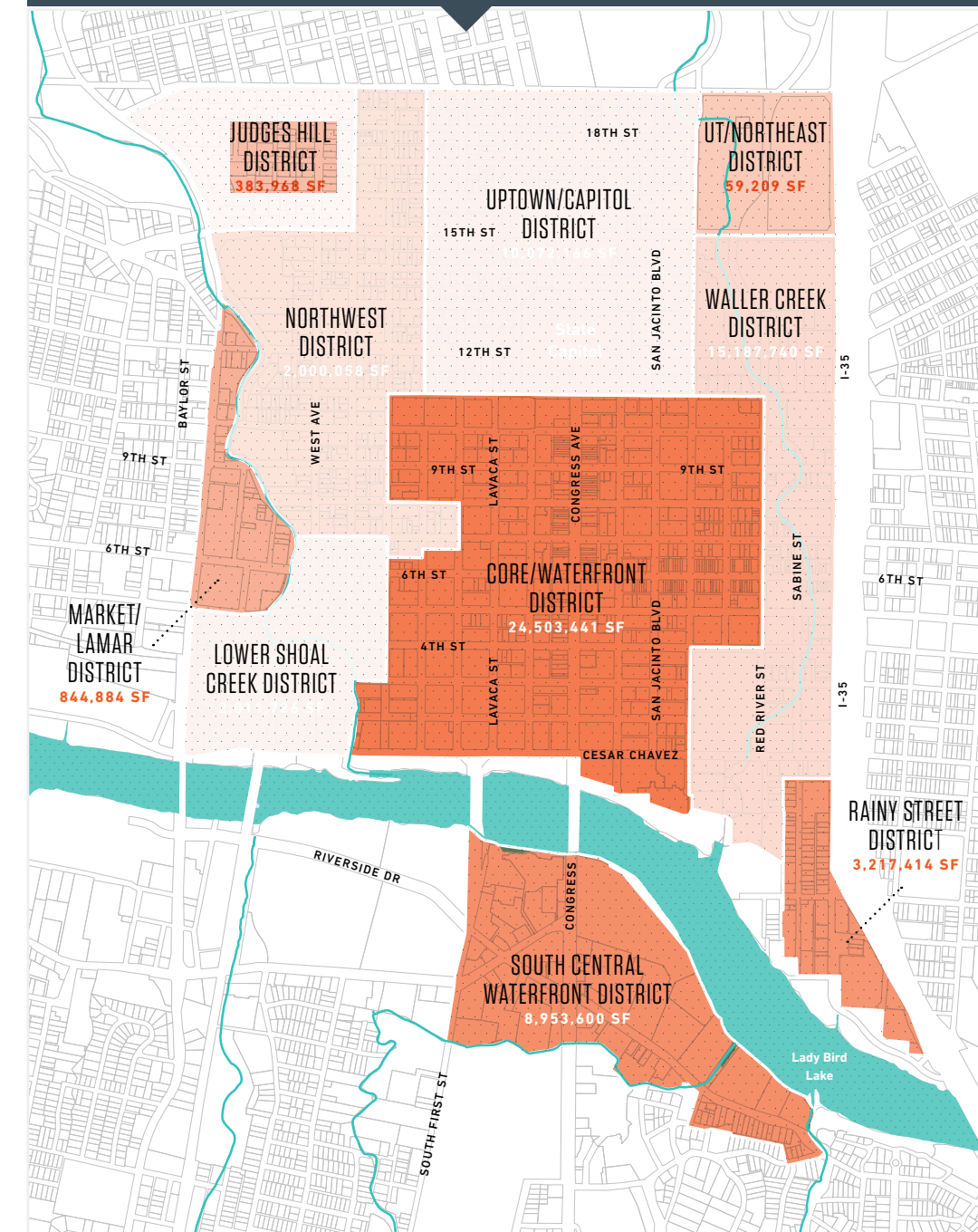
Austin is the 8th-fastest growing city in the U.S., and downtown mirrors this growth. The built environment, residential population and workforce of our urban core are all rapidly expanding.

The Downtown Austin Alliance conducted a comprehensive analysis of future development capacity to help our community better plan for growth. This map shows how much new development would likely occur downtown, and where, given existing development regulations and property ownership. We found that downtown Austin has the capacity, with existing land development codes, to double the space of the built environment.

Right: UT System Building; Opposite: Littlefield Building, Congress Avenue



Downtown Development POTENTIAL BY DISTRICT



The Downtown Alliance did a development capacity analysis

Potential Build Out STATS

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

5.7
Million SF

MID-TERM REDEVELOPMENT

Opportunity (2020-2030)

22.6
Million SF

LONG-TERM REDEVELOPMENT

Opportunity (2030 and Beyond)

Without Density Bonus:	With Density Bonus:	Total Development Potential:
18.3	35.0	63.3
Million SF	Million SF	Million SF





INDUSTRY Recognition

TOP MARKET

for Real Estate Opportunities

Urban Land Institute, 2017

Best Performing

LARGE METRO ECONOMY

Through 2021

U.S. Conference of Mayors, 2017

Best U.S. Non-Gateway City for

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE Investment

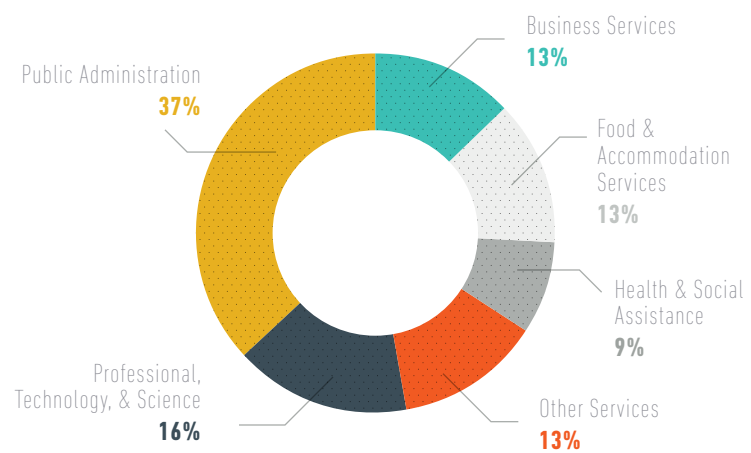
DLA Piper's State of the Market Survey, 2017

Above: UT System Building

Office Market

Downtown Austin is a major employment hub, as home to 13% of the city's jobs. Downtown's culture of creativity and innovation draws some of the region's top talent and industry leaders in business, technology, public administration, and health and social services.

DOWNTOWN JOBS BY INDUSTRY



NUMBER OF JOBS (2017)

1,050K

Austin Metro

694K

Austin—City

91K

Downtown Austin

Source: JobsEQ, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017

Rental rate (\$/SF):

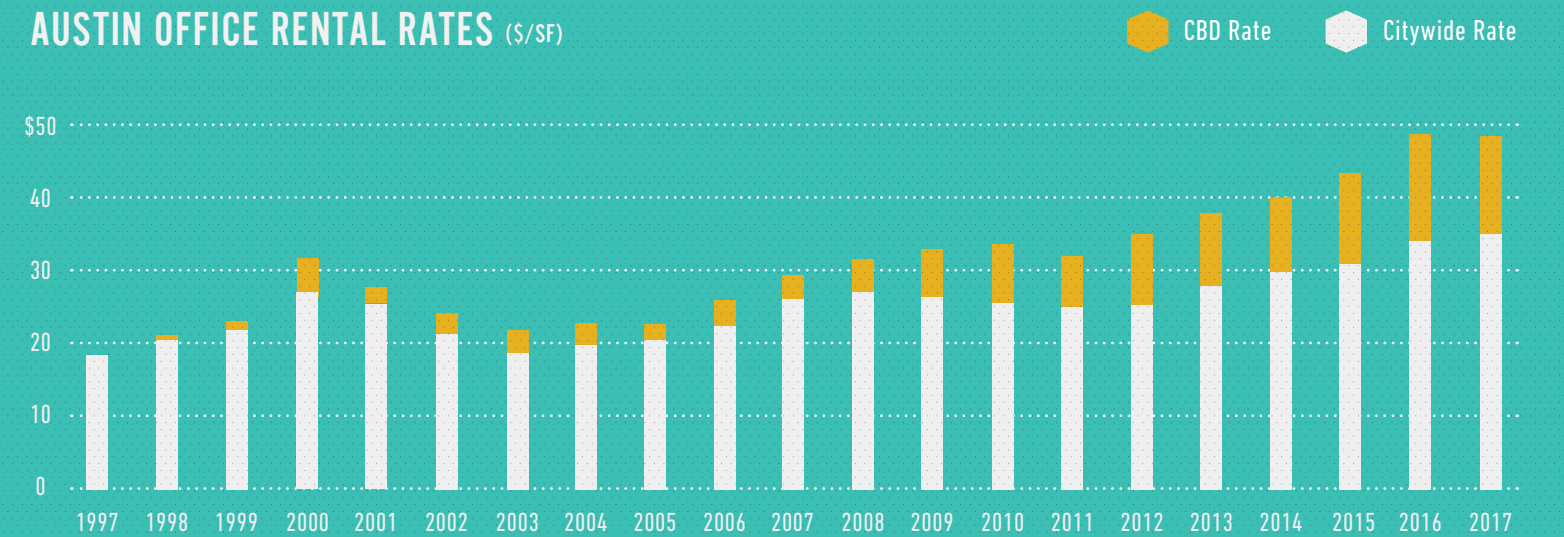
\$47.96

Occupancy rate:

92.3%

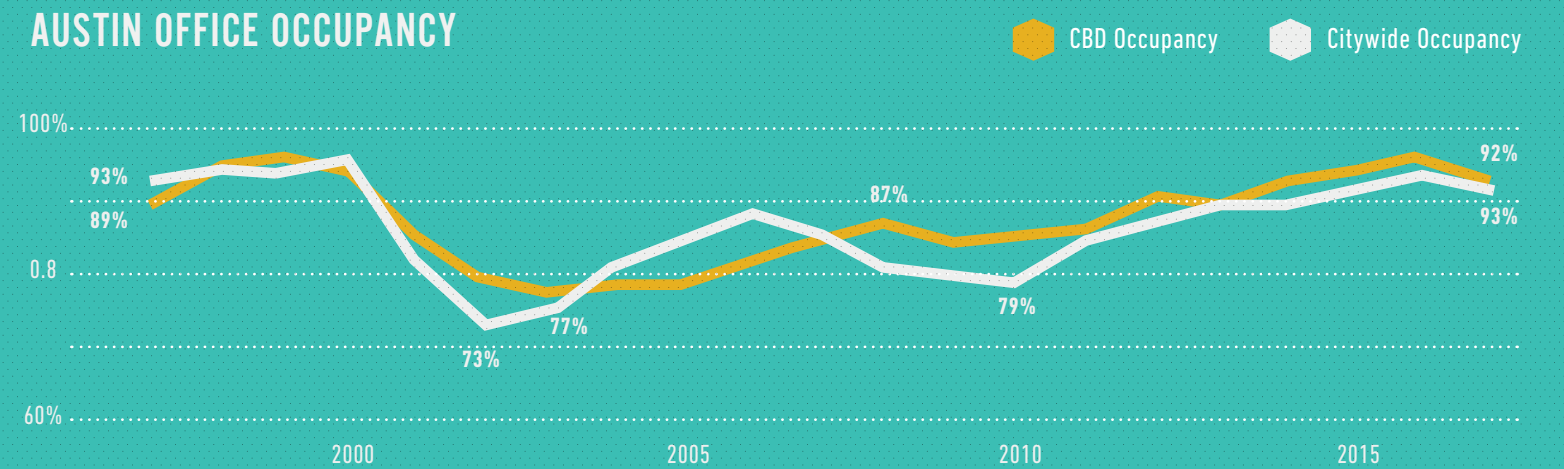
Source: CoStar, 2017

AUSTIN OFFICE RENTAL RATES (\$/SF)



Source: Capitol Market Research, December 2017

AUSTIN OFFICE OCCUPANCY



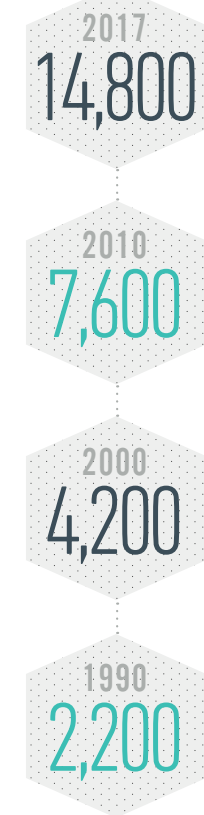
Source: Capitol Market Research, December 2017

Residential Market

Downtown Austin's population has grown by 573 percent since 1990. More than 7,000 people have moved downtown in the last seven years, and the area's population continues to grow. More than 1,244 apartment and condo

units are under construction, with another 2,095 planned. Real estate development has responded to market demand successfully, maintaining an occupancy rate above 90 percent since 2000.

DOWNTOWN Population



Source: U.S. Census, mySidewalk, Downtown Austin Alliance

DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL Stats

Units Under Construction: **1,244**
 Units Planned: **2,095**

Source: Downtown Austin Alliance, City of Austin Economic Development Department, 2018

DOWNTOWN DEMOGRAPHICS

1.5

Average Household Size

74%

College Educated

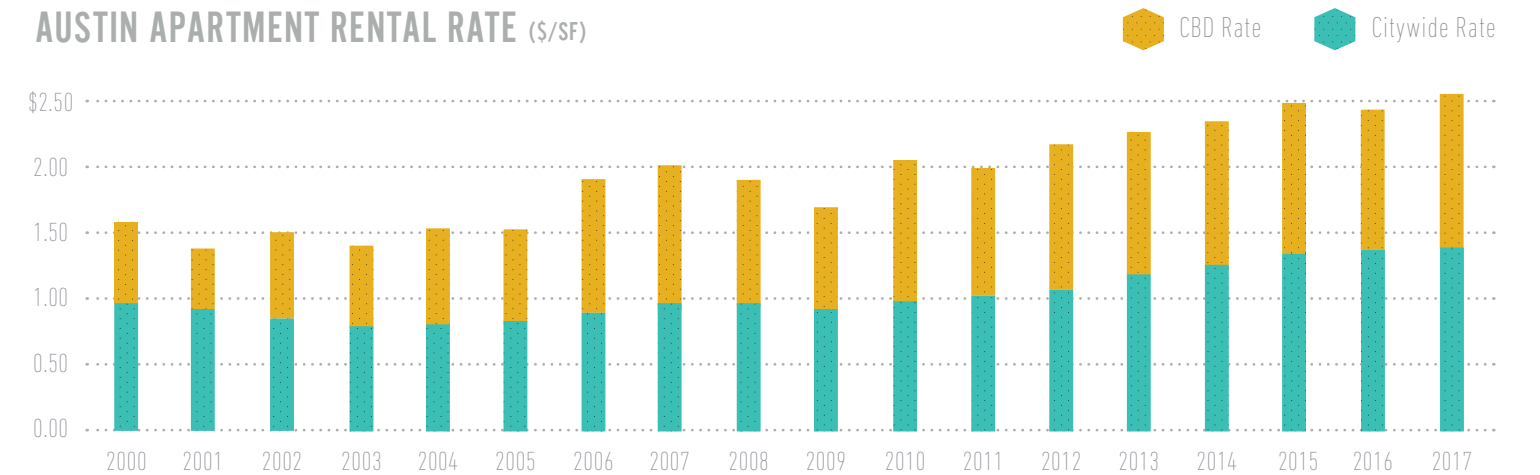
37

Median Age

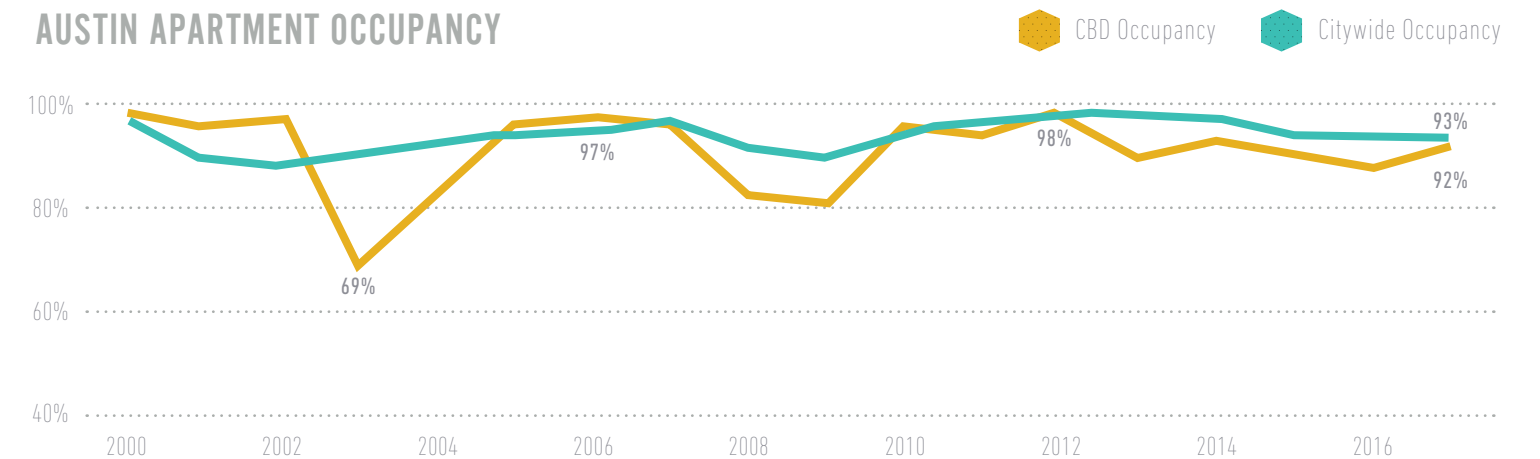
Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016

DOWNTOWN AUSTIN Apartment Market

AUSTIN APARTMENT RENTAL RATE (\$/SF)



AUSTIN APARTMENT OCCUPANCY



Source: Capitol Market Research, December 2017

Hotel Market

Austin is the Live Music Capital of the World, and downtown Austin is center stage. Music festivals and clubs draw visitors to downtown, as do sporting events, conventions, museums, outdoor activities, and our famous urban bat colony. These attractions anchor Austin's strong tourism industry: in 2017, 26 million visitors added \$1 billion to the city's economy. Austin's visitor count has grown by 1 million annually for the past few years, increasing demand for event space and hotel rooms. The number of hotel rooms downtown has more than doubled since 2010.

Top: Fairmont Austin and JW Marriott Austin, from East Austin; Bottom: Aloft and Element Hotels, Congress Avenue

DOWNTOWN
Hotel
Development

HOTEL ROOMS
Under Construction

1,003

HOTEL ROOMS
Planned

926

NEW DOWNTOWN HOTELS
(2017-18)

Hyatt House

Aloft and Element

Fairmont

Attendance AT MAJOR EVENTS

AUSTIN CITY
LIMITS MUSIC
FESTIVAL

450

Thousand
People

SOUTH BY
SOUTHWEST

344

Thousand
People

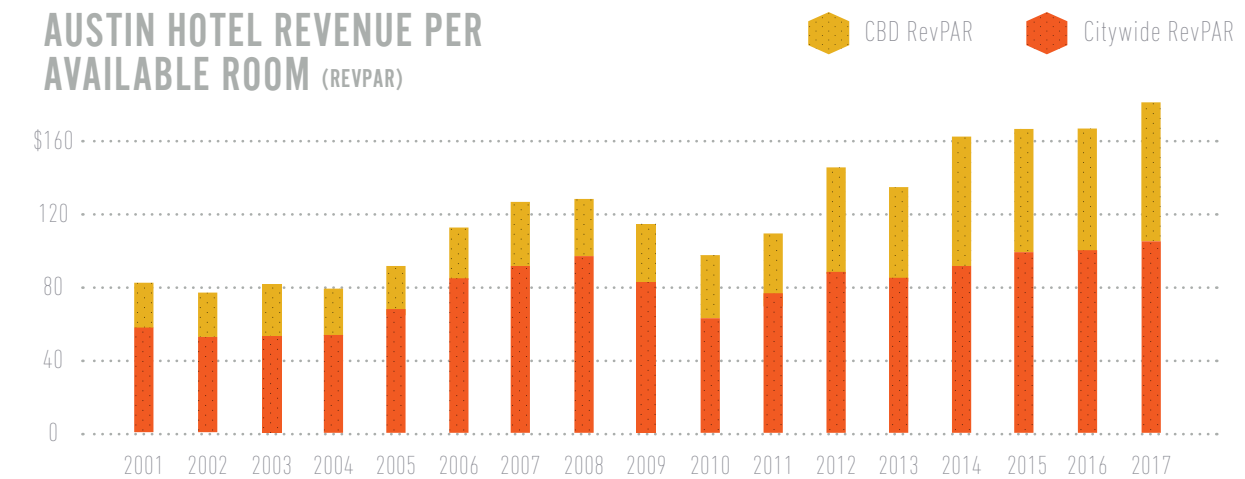
UT
FOOTBALL

98

Thousand
People
(average per game)

Source:
Austin Business Journal, 2016; Visit Austin, 2017

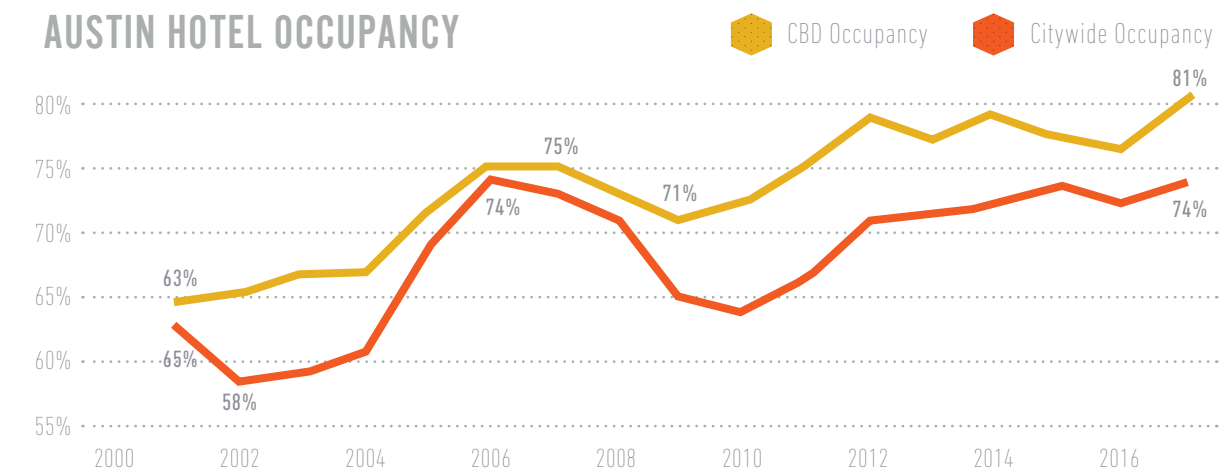
AUSTIN HOTEL REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM (REVPAR)



HOTEL ROOMS
10,615

OCCUPANCY
RATE
81%

AUSTIN HOTEL OCCUPANCY



AVERAGE
DAILY RATE
\$218.61

REVENUE PER
AVAILABLE ROOM
\$182

Source: Austin Convention Center & Visitors Bureau, 2017

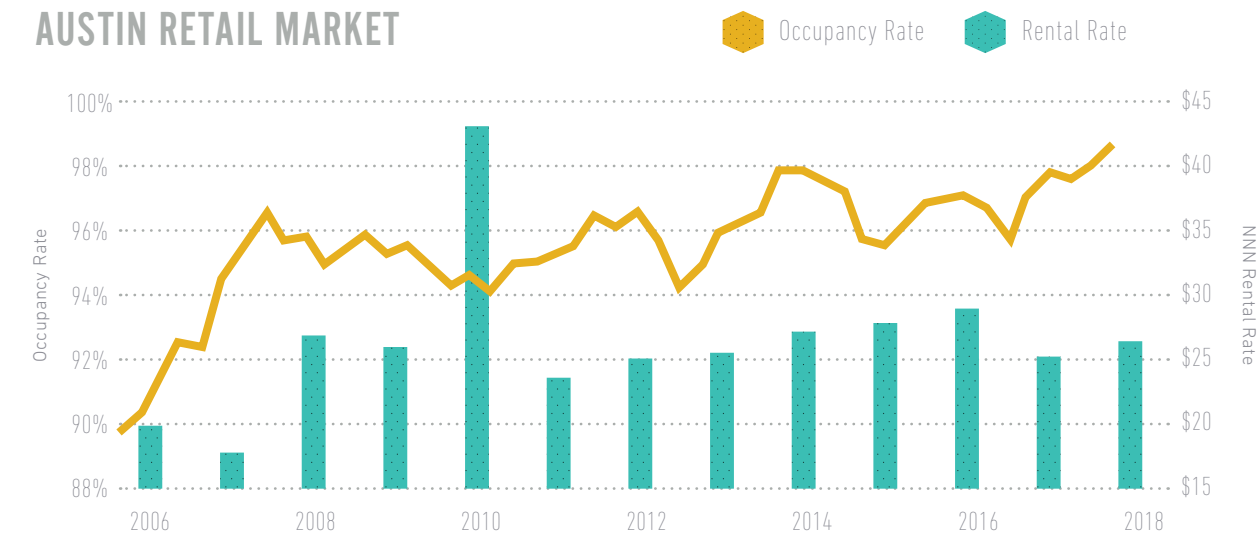
Retail Market

Downtown's retail occupancy rate is 98 percent—compared to 96 percent citywide. Twenty-four new retail establishments opened in 2017 alone, including 12 restaurants. Downtown-area residents are ideal customers for retail establishments. They're highly mobile and educated, have an average household income of \$106,000, and spend a large portion of their income on clothes and the latest technology.

Left to Right: ModCloth Store, Modern Market restaurant, North Italia restaurant



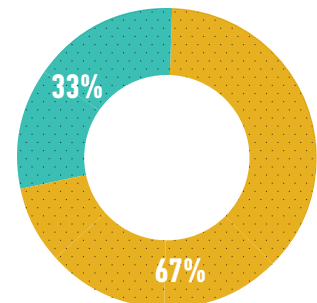
AUSTIN RETAIL MARKET



Source: CoStar, 2017; ESRI, Community Impact

RETAIL MARKET Stats

LOCAL/NATIONAL Retail Outlets



Local National

MARKET

Rental Rate: **\$25/SF**
Occupancy Rate: **98%**

24 OPENINGS IN 2017
13 Restaurants
11 Retail Establishments

RETAIL SPACE

Under Construction: **58,550 SF**
Planned: **151,750 SF**



1ST FLOOR INVENTORY

105 Restaurants Full Service	84 Restaurants Limited Service	115 Retail Goods	105 Retail Services
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Downtown Austin Vision:

SHAPING OUR FUTURE

About the Downtown Austin Vision

The Downtown Austin Alliance updates its strategic agenda every five years. We analyze our progress, envision downtown's ideal future, and set priorities for the work we'll do to shape that future.

When the time came to plan for 2018-2023, we decided to involve the entire community. If downtown is to grow in a way that supports Austin's values and aspirations, we believe all Austinites should be involved in setting its trajectory. We spent 2017 engaging community members of all ages and backgrounds in creating a shared downtown vision.

The Downtown Austin Vision, outlined over the following pages, is a catalyst for the Downtown Alliance, along with Austin's leaders and citizens, to develop a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities that come with our growth, and to thoughtfully and intentionally develop consensus about the right next steps in downtown's evolution. We will use this vision to guide our work over the next five years and beyond.

Opposite: Community's
Table event
participants show
their vision board
for the future of
downtown Austin



Public Engagement

The Downtown Austin Alliance led an extensive, unprecedented public engagement campaign to create the Downtown Austin Vision. We involved our immediate downtown community—residents, workers, business owners and visitors—but we also sought input from those throughout Central Texas who come downtown rarely or even never.

Through focus groups, community workshops, interviews and online surveys we asked people:

Picture downtown Austin in 10 or 15 years. What would you like to see?

More than 3,000 people participated in our visioning process in the fall of 2017. Their ideas will live on not only within our Downtown Austin Vision, but also atop The Community's Table. At our Community's Table workshops, we asked each person to write their vision for downtown Austin on a block of wood. We used these blocks to create The Community's Table, a visual reminder of our shared hopes and aspirations for downtown. The table was on display at Republic Square as a temporary art piece from October 2017 to March 2018. Sections of the table will be displayed throughout the Downtown Alliance's new office as a constant reminder of the community's vision for downtown Austin.



Community's Table event participants show their vision boards for the future of downtown Austin

Vision Engagement Summary

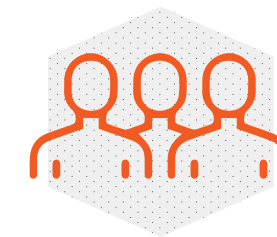
OVER **3K**

Voices shaped the Downtown Vision

GENERATING

10K+

Thoughts and Ideas



16

Focus Groups (141 Participants)

14

Workshops and Events

2.2K

Online Survey Responses

8

The Community's Table Events

24

Community Leader Interviews

40K+ Impressions

from **Twitter, Facebook** and **Instagram**

OVER **75** local zip codes represented

500 LOCAL ARTIST Designed Coloring Books Distributed

2K+ VISITORS to Engage.DowntownAustin.Com



THE DOWNTOWN YOU WILL ALWAYS LOVE



▶▶ PRIORITIES

More than 3,000 Austinites helped shape this vision for downtown Austin, identifying four priorities that work together to create and sustain *the downtown you will always love*. By the year 2039 —Austin’s 200th birthday— downtown will be a place with vibrant neighborhoods and places that welcome everyone. It will be a place that is convenient to get to and enjoyable to get around. Because of this, downtown will thrive and prosper. And when downtown prospers, so does the entire region.

30

THRIVING CENTER

Downtown is the thriving center of business and community life, creating economic prosperity for the entire region.

1. Maintain and promote downtown as the region’s primary business and cultural center.
2. Continue to attract and grow new businesses, residents and visitors to foster downtown’s economy.
3. Foster a range of attainable creative office and start-up spaces.
4. Preserve and grow existing retail businesses, historic and cultural assets. Attract new ones.
5. Position downtown for a successful retail future.
6. Invest in and grow the local workforce downtown.

WELCOMING PLACES

Downtown is beloved for diverse and engaging parks, places and experiences that attract and welcome everyone.

1. Deliver a consistently clean and safe downtown experience.
2. Broadly address the needs of people experiencing homelessness, and the associated impacts.
3. Transform public spaces into an integrated, walkable, vibrant experience of arts, greenspace, music, culture and creativity- for everyone.
4. Create new parks, places and connections where possible.
5. Maximize the green infrastructure benefits of the public realm.
5. Tell the varied stories of Austin and its people in downtown’s public places.
7. Leverage the waterfront as an integral part of the downtown experience.

GROWING NEIGHBORHOOD

Downtown is a growing and ever-evolving tapestry of complete, vibrant and walkable neighborhoods and districts that express Austin’s authentic character.

1. Grow downtown’s unique and vibrant mixed-use neighborhoods and districts. Preserve and leverage what is authentically Austin as we grow—history, nature, music, art, and culture.
2. Foster the growth of a more diverse downtown residential population.
3. Make downtown a family-friendly place to live and visit.
4. Create extremely vibrant and walkable streets.
5. Plan collaboratively for downtown’s evolving edges, connections and urban density.

LEADING MOBILITY

Downtown is the leader and champion of innovative urban transportation alternatives.

1. Create compact centers and corridors in Austin’s central core.
2. Provide a variety of options for people to get to and from downtown, including a robust transit network in central Austin.
3. Provide a variety of options for people to get around downtown.
4. Position downtown as the leader and hub of smart mobility technology.
5. Improve the experience and availability of parking in downtown while planning smartly for the future.
6. Maximize effective transportation options for downtown commuters, visitors and residents.

31



04

Planning Downtown DISTRICTS, STREETS & PLACES



Master Plans and Other Long-Term Initiatives

DISTRICTS:

A SOUTH CENTRAL WATERFRONT VISION FRAMEWORK PLAN
In June 2016, the Austin City Council adopted this master plan, which provides a vision for the redevelopment of the prime, 118-acre South Central Waterfront area. This ambitious, forward-thinking plan will take decades to implement and require new public-private partnerships and sustained leadership. Austin City Council created the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board to assist with coordination and implementation of the plan.

B AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER LONG-RANGE MASTER PLAN
In early 2015, the Austin Convention Center Department completed

its long-range master plan, which recommends expanding the Convention Center facilities. The preferred Convention Center design, a westward, non-contiguous expansion, is being considered by City of Austin leadership. City Council is exploring options and funding for the plan and has commissioned a study by the University of Texas Center for Sustainable Development, to be completed fall 2018.

C 2016 TEXAS CAPITOL COMPLEX MASTER PLAN
This multiphased plan depicts a long-term vision for the state-owned property from 11th Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. It makes provisions for a quality public realm, historic preservation, urban design,

mobility and connectivity with other districts. Phase I, which broke ground in fall 2017, will construct two new state office buildings for relocation and consolidation of state agencies, as well as a pedestrian-oriented Texas Mall and underground parking along Congress Avenue north of the Capitol.

D INNOVATION DISTRICT
The Downtown Alliance is working with Capital City Innovation, along with anchor institutions Central Health, Dell Medical School and Ascension Texas/Seton Healthcare, to shape the east side of downtown into an emerging innovation district. For more information, see Spotlight on page 36.

E SEAHOLM WATERFRONT PLANNING
In 2017, Austin Parks Foundation, The Trail Foundation, and Austin Parks and Recreation Department partnered to develop a long-term vision for the Seaholm Waterfront, including the historic Seaholm Intake Facility and its surrounding parkland. The architecture and urban design firm Studio Gang, in collaboration with eight local subconsultants, was hired to lead a process to determine the best possible uses and programs for the space and identify phasing, funding and partnership opportunities.

F EMMA S. BARRIENTOS MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER MASTER PLAN
The Austin Parks and Recreation Department is developing a vision and master plan for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (ESB-MACC). In 2017, CasaBella Architects and a team of consultants was hired to lead a master planning and public engagement process that could result in the expansion of existing ESB-MACC buildings; the addition of new buildings and facilities, shade structures, parking and landscaping; and the potential redesign of the plaza.

CORRIDORS

A WALLER CREEK
The Waller Creek Conservancy, in partnership with the City of Austin, is actively designing and redeveloping a 35-acre park district along the 1.5-mile stretch of Waller Creek in downtown Austin. The project will create a world-class chain of parks connected by a system of accessible trails. The first phase, Waterloo Park, broke ground in fall of 2017 and will provide 11.5 acres

of park space including an outdoor amphitheater, miles of trails, nature-based play areas and garden spaces. The Conservancy is designing the second phase, which will include the Waller Delta and will connect historic Palm Park to the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail and Lady Bird Lake. Completion of all project phases is anticipated by the end of 2025.

B SHOAL CREEK
The Shoal Creek Conservancy, in partnership with the City of Austin, is leading the effort to plan for and improve the Shoal Creek Corridor. Current efforts include a Shoal Creek Watershed Plan, a Vision to Action Trail Plan for the entire trail corridor, and a focus on improving Shoal Creek at Third Street, including an assessment of options for the historic bridge crossing and rail trestle.

C MOBILITY35: DOWNTOWN SEGMENT OF I-35
The Texas Department of Transportation is evaluating design options for a large I-35 improvement project that proposes adding two managed lanes in each direction. The newly proposed concept presumes I-35 will be lowered from Cesar Chavez to Eight Street and north of 15th Street. Statewide politics regarding tolling resulted in the Texas Transportation Commission bending to calls for an end to toll projects, all without an identified source to back fill the financing mechanism. The Downtown Alliance and our partners will continue advocating for the I-35 improvement project to be completed in a way that would significantly improve traffic flow and quality of life in the community.

D CONGRESS AVENUE URBAN DESIGN INITIATIVE
In partnership with the Downtown Alliance and community stakeholder groups, in early 2017 the City of Austin contracted Sasaki Associates and their team of local sub-consultants to lead the creation of a vision and urban design concept for Congress Avenue from the Capitol to Riverside. This year we guided planning through a series of public engagement processes. For more information, see Spotlight on page 39.

DOWNTOWN-WIDE EFFORTS

A AUSTIN 2030 DISTRICT
The Austin 2030 District is a growing collaborative of property owners and managers, professional service providers, and community organizations that have committed to reduce the downtown business district's energy use, water use, and carbon emissions – all while stimulating economic growth. The Downtown Alliance was instrumental in the launching of the 2030 District for Austin as an influencer and founding member. Downtown property owners and managers have already committed 17 million square feet to the district.

B DOWNTOWN AUSTIN PARKING STRATEGY
Led by the Downtown Alliance, the Downtown Austin Parking Strategy is a forward-thinking effort to improve parking in the downtown area. The initiative includes a full inventory of existing parking and an assessment of future parking needs. For more information, see Spotlight on page 46.

Above: Fareground at One Eleven;
Opposite: Flower Child restaurant on 2nd Street





C CODENEXT

CodeNEXT is the City of Austin's initiative to revise the land development code, which determines how land can be used throughout the city – including what can be built, where it can be built, and how much can (and cannot) be built. For more on the Downtown Alliance's work to ensure the code supports further downtown development, see update on page 58.

D OUR AUSTIN STORY

The Downtown Alliance, in partnership with Austin Parks and Recreation Department, is developing a comprehensive interpretive strategy for the three historic city squares (Brush, Republic, and Wooldridge) and Congress Avenue. The interpretive strategy will help guide programming and interpre-

tive signage that reflect Austin's multicultural and diverse heritage.

E REPOWERING DOWNTOWN AUSTIN

As the downtown area continues to see rapid growth, Austin Energy is looking to meet the increased demand for electricity by upgrading existing downtown Austin electrical facilities, and by building new electrical infrastructure. A new substation is currently being developed on a parcel owned by Austin Energy at 55 East Avenue, and is targeted for completion in 2020.

F CAPITAL METRO CONNECTIONS2025

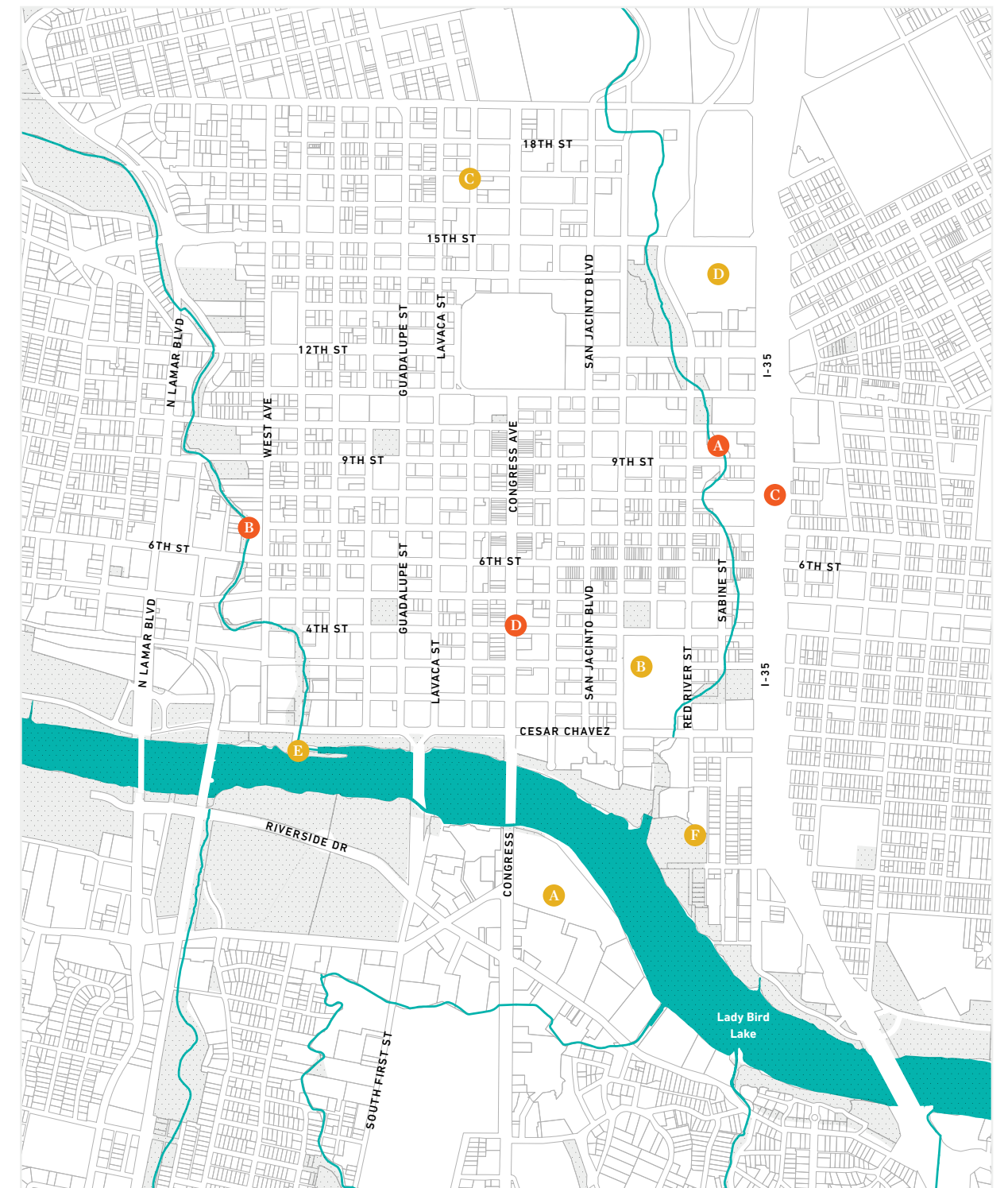
Connections2025 is Capital Metro's 10-year vision for a more frequent, more reliable and more connected transit system. It will result in widespread changes that will begin to take effect in summer 2018.

These include changes to over half of the system's 82 routes, the addition of more high-frequency routes and enhancements to east-west service.

G AUSTIN STRATEGIC MOBILITY PLAN

The City of Austin is developing a new citywide transportation plan for all of Austin. Launched in 2016, the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) will advance the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan into actionable mobility-related goals and objectives to help guide Austin's future transportation planning and investments. The ASMP is expected to be presented to City Council for adoption in fall 2018.

Opposite: SXSW Cities Summit participants on a walking tour of downtown transformative projects, led by the Downtown Alliance



SPOTLIGHT:

Innovation District

The economy is increasingly reliant on innovation—approximately 20 percent of U.S. jobs are now in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM)-related occupations. Innovation requires lots of brainpower, and today's best and brightest minds typically crave urban, walkable neighborhoods where they can live, work, play and most importantly, cross paths with one another in daily life. These forces, among others, are driving the emergence of innovation districts across the U.S.

Innovation districts, as defined by the Brookings Institution, are geographic areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators and accelerators. They are also physically compact, transit-accessible and technically wired, and offer mixed-use housing, office and retail. This proximity encourages people from different sectors to socialize and collaborate on new ideas.

Downtown Austin's east side has all the ingredients for creating an innovation district:

- Dell Medical School and Dell Seton Medical Center at The University of Texas at Austin
- Central Health Brackenridge Campus (planned redevelopment)
- Austin Convention Center (expansion planned)
- Capital Metro's Downtown Station (redevelopment planned)
- Waller Creek chain of parks (Waterloo Park under construction)
- Potential for lowering I-35 through downtown
- Texas Capitol Complex master plan
- South Central Waterfront master plan

Connecting these places physically, virtually, and economically into Austin's innovation district will take vision, passion and partnerships – and that's where the Downtown Austin Alliance comes in.

In January 2017, we organized a trip to Atlanta for our team, Texas State Senator Watson, and other community leaders to learn from the visionaries behind Technology Square, one of the country's most successful innovation districts. Inspired by our experience in Atlanta, we reconvened the attendees into a working group.* The group gathered throughout the year and developed a set of best practices, shared values and desired outcomes for our emerging, authentically Austin, innovation district.

The Downtown Alliance complemented the group's research with an April 2017 trip to St. Louis's innovation district, Cortex, which boasts nearly 330 companies located near Washington University and St. Louis University. Our team, along with representatives from Austin Mayor Steve Adler's office, was invited to St. Louis to participate in the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Innovation District Working Group.

Our research revealed that bold, intentional, horizontal leadership is key to creating a successful innovation district. To that end, Austin innovation district's anchor institutions, Central Health, Dell Medical School and Ascension Texas/Seton Healthcare, have created a nonprofit called Capital City Innovation (CCI) to seed the district. The Downtown Alliance is an investor in CCI. In 2018, we will work with CCI leadership and our working group partners to develop a vision and blueprint for the district and then begin working toward making it a reality.

**Austin Innovation District Working Group members include Senator Watson, Mayor Adler, and CEOs and executives from Senator Watson's Office, Texas Governor Greg Abbott's Office, City of Austin, Ascension Texas/Seton Healthcare, Austin Chamber of Commerce, Capital City Innovation, Central Health, Dell Medical School, Downtown Austin Alliance, M. Crane & Associates, Texas Facilities Commission, University of Texas System and Waller Creek Conservancy.*



EXPERIENCE DOWNTOWN LIKE A LOCAL: Walking Tours at SXSW Cities Summit

The Downtown Austin Alliance and Public City hosted two walking tours during the Cities Summit at SXSW 2018, a new convergence program to facilitate dialogue about cities' roles in driving societal change. Tour guests came from cities around the U.S. and the world, including Austin. They visited the emerging parks, projects and public places that are transforming the Austin experience, such

as the new Central Library, Shoal Creek Conservancy and Capital Metro's downtown station. Jim Ritts, Downtown Alliance board member and CEO/executive director of the Austin Theatre Alliance, led the tours.

The tours were modeled after one of the Cities Summit panels, Reimagining the Civic Commons. Two of the panelists joined us on the tour: Carol Coletta, a placemaking

guru leading the Kresge Foundation's Reimagining the Civic Commons program, and Kathryn Ott Lovell, commissioner of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. The Downtown Alliance used the tours as an opportunity for people to learn from the local experts, from the public, private and nonprofit sectors, who are reinventing our own civic commons.



SPOTLIGHT: *Our Congress Avenue — Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative*

As the central spine of downtown Austin and the connection between Lady Bird Lake and the Texas State Capitol, Congress Avenue is arguably Austin’s most prominent street. Despite this, the Avenue lacks the vitality and identity of a great people-centric place.

To refine and realize the vision for Congress Avenue, the Downtown Austin Alliance and the City of Austin have partnered on an urban design initiative called “Our Congress Avenue.” Our goal is to shape the Avenue into a human-centric, multifunctional, complete street with a clear and attractive identity. The City Council-approved Downtown Austin Plan calls for improving Congress Avenue as the “Main Street of Texas,” and the project is made possible with funding from the City’s 2012 bond program.

Together with community stakeholder groups and the contracted urban design consultant team led by Sasaki Associates, the City and Downtown Alliance spent 2017 guiding an extensive public engagement process to gather input on the future development of Congress Avenue. We want to give every Austinite and Texan an opportunity to share their priorities and ideas.

In April 2017, the Downtown Alliance hosted an open house with expert speakers to launch the process. More than 150 people joined us to “walk the Avenue” (laid out in colorful tape across the floor and represented by a scale 3D model) and discuss the future of Congress. The design team gathered comments on subjects ranging from economic development and ecology to social equity. We also held an interactive celebration for XYZ Atlas: Congress Avenue, a temporary, collaborative public art initiative that invited

visitors to share their memorable experiences on Congress Avenue. Attendees took the initiative’s web survey and engaged with a 3D model of the Avenue. We are using the collected data to inspire and inform the design concepts.

For our second round of public engagement in June, Austinites took to the streets to explore ideas for transforming Congress Avenue. People of all ages spent two days taking walking tours, biking along mocked-up streets, testing the performance of streetscape materials, and building their favorite street prototypes using combinations of spaces for people, trees, bikes, cars and transit. The fun culminated with a marching band making its way up Congress Avenue.

The team spent the rest of the year synthesizing public feedback into design concept options for the Avenue. We will unveil the design concepts at our third public engagement event in spring 2018. In the meantime, we released a summary of our findings from the first two engagement events on the project’s web page. And we used these findings to develop our goals for Our Congress Avenue:

- **Social Equity:** Ensure a welcoming, accessible and representative space for all
- **Mobility & Connectivity:** Re-balance mobility options along Congress Avenue
- **Culture & History:** Enhance Congress Avenue as a destination
- **Economics:** Amplify the economic strength and diversity of Congress Avenue
- **Environment:** Celebrate biodiversity and urban habitat in a functional, resilient streetscape design

Left: The community shared ideas of how to transform Congress Avenue at multiple interactive events

Transforming Congress Avenue

OUR GOAL

Transform what is now a street into a truly exceptional place—the greatest street in Austin and one of the great streets in the world. In recent years, the Main Street of Texas' vitality has improved, but it is not yet optimized as the economic and cultural backbone of downtown.

OUR PROGRESS

DESIGNING AND PLANNING THE AVENUE

The Downtown Austin Alliance is working with our partners, members and the community to shape the future of every block of Congress Avenue—from the Texas Capitol to Lady Bird Lake.

Our Congress Avenue: Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative

In partnership with the City of Austin and other stakeholder groups, we continued to guide the development of a long-term vision for Congress Avenue. For more details, see the spotlight on page 39.

South Central Waterfront

We continued to stay actively engaged in the South Central Waterfront Initiative, the City of Austin's master planning process for the area bordering Lady Bird Lake's southern shore. Molly Alexander represents Downtown Alliance as an ex officio member of the South Central Waterfront Board. The 425 W. Riverside Planned Unit Development is the first project to be considered for the area after plan



adoption. This property owner has petitioned to join the Downtown PID and will make contributions to affordable housing and amenities for the area.

MAINTAINING AND BEAUTIFYING THE AVENUE

The Downtown Alliance manages a team of Downtown Ambassadors, maintenance contractors and city partners who work together to keep Congress Avenue functional and beautiful. They power wash the streets every day and conduct weekly quality control checks to keep landscaping, lighting and infrastructure maintained. This year, our team painted all planters, benches, light posts and trash cans along the Avenue.

We also increased our usage of native plants and worked with the City of Austin's Public Works Department to trim and maintain Congress Avenue's 197 trees. The lights decorating these trees are nearing the end of their life expectancy. We are forming a task force to develop a temporary lighting strategy and will install new, permanent lighting once we complete the streetscape improvements outlined in the Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative.

PLACEMAKING ON THE AVENUE

To make Congress Avenue a place where people love to gather, we activate the avenue through events and public art and work with property owners to create welcoming outdoor spaces.



XYZ ATLAS: CONGRESS AVENUE

In March and April 2017, downtown experienced XYZ Atlas: Congress Avenue, a temporary, interactive public art initiative that reveals how our emotions and experiences are connected to our surroundings. The piece, which was created by artist Jennifer Chenoweth and installed at the corner of Congress Avenue and Cesar Chavez, asked people to visit a website, share memorable experiences they have had on Congress Avenue and locate the exact place where they occurred.

XYZ Atlas not only created a visual representation of people's connections to Congress, but it also helped inform the Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative's stakeholder engagement process. The Downtown Alliance commissioned XYZ Atlas in partnership with Project for Public Spaces, supported by a grant from Southwest Airlines.

POCKET PATIOS AND SIDEWALK DINING

Since 2014, the Downtown Alliance has worked with property owners to test the addition of sidewalk dining and pocket patios to Congress Avenue. The success of these pilot programs enabled us to create a formalized permitting process with the City of Austin. We are very pleased to see the market for these vital spaces and services taking hold.

HOLIDAY SING-ALONG AND DOWNTOWN STROLL

This year's Holiday Sing-Along and Downtown Stroll was our biggest yet, with an estimated 13,000 attendees. The Downtown Alliance has partnered with KUT 90.5 FM and KUTX 98.9 on this holiday tradition since 2002. The 2017 event featured the lighting of our 42-foot, musical Christmas tree on Congress Avenue, photos with Santa in an VW Bus, a holiday night market by Sustainable Food Center's Farmers' Market, a Winter Wonderland with a magic snow pit, and dance performances by local dance and aerial troupes. The event also featured live music performances from some of Austin's favorites, including Riders Against the Storm, Gina Chavez, Jane Ellen Bryant, DJ Hexum and Charlie Faye & The Fayettes.

Above: Viva la Vida Parade on Congress Avenue; Opposite: Jane Ellen Bryant performs at the Holiday Sing-Along and Downtown Stroll. Photo by Erika Rich

Improving MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE



OUR GOAL

Make downtown Austin readily accessible by a variety of effective, efficient and pleasant transportation options. The existing system is inadequate, limiting access and therefore downtown's economic potential.

OUR PROGRESS

BUILDING DEMAND FOR ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

While we need to add more options for getting into and out of downtown, we also need to ensure people are fully optimizing our current system. Many commuters would like to use alternative transportation but continue to drive out of habit or a lack of knowledge

about other options. Through Movability and our public engagement efforts, the Downtown Austin Alliance is helping commuters understand how they can combine the city's transportation modes into a route that works for them.

Movability

The Downtown Alliance entered its second year of managing Movability, a transportation management association that helps employers and employees find the best options for traveling to, from and around downtown. We significantly accelerated Movability's growth, adding new corporate partners such as 3M, Samsung and Merck. Movability finalized a new

strategic plan, hired a new executive director, expanded its focus to the region, and restructured membership to add new partnerships and programs. It also expanded its professional services offerings, helping several large corporations create and implement mobility plans that will enable them to attract and retain employees, decrease parking fees and other capital costs, and minimize their effect on traffic congestion.

In 2017, Movability worked with more than 60 companies in Central Texas, enabling over 25,000 of their employees to access time- and money-saving commute options. Over half of these companies are headquartered in downtown Austin or have at least one downtown location.

INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

With downtown Austin projected to double in built square footage, we need to increase the capacity and efficiency of every transportation mode. We need more buses, more routes, more dedicated lanes, and more companies developing innovative transportation alternatives. The Downtown Alliance is working with the public and private sector to support options that will enable the community's collective vision for downtown.

MoPac Improvements

The MoPac express lanes opened this year, providing a reliable new way for commuters to get downtown. The express lanes were built with public transportation in mind, and buses are able to use the lanes without having to pay a fee. Capital Metro has added several MoPac



routes from Round Rock to downtown and plans to add more in 2018. For cars, the lanes use variable tolling to prevent congestion. Managing the number of vehicles using the lane also helps maintain speeds of at least 45 miles per hour. The Downtown Alliance advocated for the lanes because they enable public transportation to travel on a predictable schedule.

I-35 Improvements

The Downtown Alliance strongly supported “Capital Express,” a plan for I-35 improvements proposed by Texas Senator Kirk Watson and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in October 2017. The proposal calls for adding two managed express lanes to I-35 in each direction, spanning from Buda to Round Rock, as well as lowering the highway through downtown Austin—creating underground lanes in some sections and capping the roadway with parks or pedestrian walkways. The Downtown Alliance supports this lowering because it would not only improve mobility, but would also dramatically improve our entire community’s quality of life. In 2017, we lead a public engagement campaign to submit more than 2,440 letters to TxDOT in support of the lowered option. We also testified to the Texas Transportation Commission in December. While Texas officials declined to advance the project at this time, we will continue to advocate for the lowered option and funding to move the project forward.

Connections 2025

The Downtown Alliance supported Capital Metro in its release of Connections 2025, a vision for developing a more frequent, more reliable and better-connected transit system over the next 5-10 years. Connections 2025 has already led to the elimination of premium fares and increased frequency of MetroRapid bus service. In June 2018, Capital Metro will roll out sweeping changes to its bus system, adding six more high-frequency bus routes, greatly improving east-west service, and updating more than half of the system’s 82 routes. We know that high-frequency routes increase ridership, and that the downtown community wants more routes in and out of the area, so we’re very pleased by these initiatives.

Private-Sector Solutions:

Ride-sharing, Ride-hailing & More

We are seeing more private-sector mobility solutions disrupting the marketplace and offering commuters alternative transportation options. Movability helped Chariot, an app-enabled shuttle van service, expand the number of circulator routes it runs to connect downtown corporate campuses, the MetroRail Downtown Station and the Republic Square transit hub.

We also supported the emergence of new transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Ride Austin and Fasten. Uber and Lyft returned to Austin in May 2017 after the Texas Legislature passed HB 100, creating a statewide system of ride-hailing regulations. We welcome the added options for commuters.

ADDITIONAL MOBILITY INITIATIVES

The Downtown Alliance also spearheads and supports projects that improve the flow of traffic downtown, whether that traffic comes from cars, buses, bikes or pedestrians.

Parking Strategy

We launched a comprehensive parking strategy for downtown and began working with the City of Austin, Travis County, the State of Texas, The University of Texas at Austin and private-sector partners to implement innovative solutions for reducing parking-related traffic congestion. For more details, see our spotlight on page 46.

Street Closures

The Downtown Alliance continued to inform the community of all upcoming downtown street closures. We also worked with special-event organizers to help them minimize each closure’s impact on mobility.

Streetscape Improvements

We continued to support the City of Austin’s active and planned downtown street improvement projects, which follow the Great Streets Master Plan.

Opposite: Butterfly Bridge and Austin’s Central Library



SPOTLIGHT: Downtown Parking Strategy

National parking studies show that, on average, 30 percent of the cars in congested downtown traffic are cruising for parking. Here in Austin, the majority of residents who travel downtown do so by automobile. Having an ample supply of convenient, available parking spaces is critical to keeping traffic flowing, especially as downtown continues its rapid growth trajectory. It's also critical to keeping the economy flowing, as reliable parking options help attract people to work, dine, play and spend money downtown.

In May 2017, the Downtown Austin Alliance rolled out the first-ever downtown Austin parking strategy: a comprehensive inventory of downtown parking options and recommendations for improvement. We worked with internationally recognized transportation planning firm Nelson\Nygaard to develop this strategy, which involved an extensive public engagement process, study of codes and policies, and detailed analysis of every downtown parking space's usage patterns.

We found that 91 percent of downtown parking is privately owned, and 1 in 4 off-street spaces are never open to the general public. Unlocking more private parking is crucial to improving downtown mobility. Our parking strategy identifies recommendations for improving downtown parking access, and in August 2017 we began implementing many of them as outlined below.

Above: Aerial view of Republic Square;
Right: Interstate 35 from E. 10th Street

- **Affordable parking program:** The City of Austin launched an affordable parking program that enables hotel workers and other service-industry professionals to park in City-owned lots after 6 p.m. for \$35/month. The program will launch in summer 2018.
- **Enforcement strategy:** We recommended increased enforcement of on-street meter time limits as a key strategy for increasing turnover—and thus parking supply. The City issued 8,200 parking tickets between June 2017 and December 2017, a significant increase over the previous months.
- **Comprehensive signage and wayfinding:** In summer 2018, the City will install new, dynamic parking signage to show drivers how many spaces are available in its parking facilities. The Downtown Alliance is working with the City of Austin to create and install a downtown wayfinding system in fall 2018.
- **Parking working group:** The Downtown Alliance convened a parking working group, creating a formal partnership among key stakeholders to implement recommendations and address future parking issues. Members include The University

of Texas at Austin, Texas Facilities Commission, Texas State Preservation Board, Travis County and the City of Austin. In late 2018, we will include private sector partners in the group to explore strategies for unlocking and monetizing their parking inventory.

- **Technology platform:** The City passed a \$9 million budget item to hire Parkeon to develop a fully integrated parking technology platform, which will enable people to use a mobile app to find and pay for both on-street and garage parking. Once the City launches the technology in 2019, private sector owners will be able to open their garages at any time and price their spaces based on real-time demand.

- **Transportation demand management policy:** The Downtown Alliance and Movability are advocating for transportation demand policy language to be included in CodeNEXT revisions. Such policy would encourage new downtown developments to promote alternatives to traditional parking models, such as subsidizing ridesharing or bike sharing.
- **Construction Worker Parking Pilot Program:** Movability created a new model for construction worker parking to support downtown construction projects and their workers.



PARKING by the Numbers

THERE ARE
71,504
parking spaces
in downtown Austin

65,099
off-street spaces
(lots or garages)

ONLY
9%
of parking
is at the curb

ABOUT
1 in **4**
off-street spaces
is never open to the
general public.

Creating a Safe and WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT



2017 BY THE Numbers

HOSPITALITY
CONTACTS
127,207

SIDEWALKS
PRESSURE WASHED
4,540,007
SF

LITTER/TRASH
REMOVED
88
tons

Graffiti Tags, Stickers
and Handbills Removed
26,442

Requests for
Compliance with
City Ordinances
27,311
(Compliance rate 96%)

911 Calls to Address
Police, Fire or EMS
Emergencies
4,289

OUR GOAL

Ensure that downtown Austin is a more enticing place—clean, safe and beautiful. Cleanliness and safety are prerequisites, but to grow its competitive advantage among Austin neighborhoods and downtowns around the country, the area must also become more beautiful, active and welcoming.

OUR PROGRESS

DOWNTOWN AMBASSADORS

The Downtown Austin Alliance manages a team of 38 Downtown Ambassadors who provide essential cleaning, beautification, hospitality and safety services to the downtown community. In 2017, we grew our team by seven Ambassadors to provide daily maintenance and hospitality services at the newly reopened Republic Square, more frequent nighttime pressure washing, and attendants for the downtown public restroom pilot.

Bringing all direct services together under one program in 2016, and providing Ambassadors with state-of-the-art equipment, technology, practices and training, increased our capacity to keep downtown clean, beautiful, safe and welcoming. This also enables us to better coordinate with our partners at Austin Police Department (APD), City of Austin's Public Works Department and Downtown Austin Community Court, among others. Additionally, Ambassadors use mobile devices and proprietary software to log all of their activities. Each entry is automatically date- and time-stamped and geo-located, and this data enables us to track trends and effectively deploy resources.

Downtown Ambassadors keep streets clean and staff a downtown public restrooms pilot

Cleaning and Beautification

Every day, Ambassadors use manual methods and state-of-the-art, mechanized equipment to keep downtown free of litter, dirt and debris and graffiti. In 2017, we expanded downtown sidewalk washing services. The Ambassadors now pressure wash sidewalks seven nights a week, recycling water to comply with watershed protection and conservation standards. Additionally, Ambassadors patrol the streets to track and report needed maintenance and repairs to City infrastructure. They also perform many beautification functions and projects such as mulching planters, dressing tree beds, removing weeds and painting.

Safety and Hospitality

Downtown Ambassadors create a more welcoming environment by providing visitors and the general public with helpful information and services. They also assist people in need of social services and support law enforcement. The Ambassadors interact with tens of thousands of individuals and business operators annually providing information, requesting compliance with City ordinances, and notifying APD, EMS and Austin Fire Department of urgent issues. From escorting downtown workers to their cars at night, to assisting with a flat tire repair, to providing directions to shops, restaurants and attractions, the Ambassadors provide a welcoming, watchful presence every day.

APD DOWNTOWN OVERTIME PATROLS

After conducting a pilot in 2016-17 to test the effectiveness of having supplemental overtime police resources

downtown, the Downtown Alliance now funds a year-round APD Overtime Patrol that puts two additional police officers downtown eight hours a day, seven days a week. This visible police presence in areas with high pedestrian traffic helps address the increasing demand for police services brought about by downtown's continued growth in residents, workers and visitors.

The Overtime Patrol is managed by APD's Downtown Area Command. The Downtown Alliance determines the patrol schedule and notifies APD of high-activity locations where the officers may be needed to address problems or to accommodate large meeting and convention groups.

Overtime Patrol officers communicate and coordinate with the Downtown Ambassadors and use the same mobile data-collection system to log their interactions and activities. These officers patrol only on bikes and are expected to interact frequently with pedestrians, property and security staff and business operators. They are not called out of the Downtown Public Improvement District to respond to 911 calls elsewhere.

Brush Square Security

Through a collaboration with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department, the Downtown Alliance funds an overnight private security detail at the historic Susanna Dickinson and O. Henry Museums at Brush Square. This was made possible by a City of Austin contribution.

Security Camera System

The Downtown Alliance funded an expansion and upgrade of APD's security camera system, adding 11 new cameras in high-activity areas downtown. In 2011, the Downtown Alliance funded the purchase and installation of APD's initial camera system, which has proven to be a

highly effective tool for preventing and solving crimes. The Downtown Alliance is now working with APD and private business and property owners to expand the downtown camera network by linking private cameras to APD's system.

PUBLIC RESTROOMS PILOT

The Downtown Alliance partnered with the City of Austin's Public Works and Public Health Departments to implement a public restroom pilot project. The purpose was to gauge the effectiveness of placing a public restroom facility in downtown locations with high pedestrian traffic. Public Works tested the temporary restroom at five different locations. It was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and Downtown Ambassadors provided cleaning, monitoring and data-collection services from 6 a.m. to midnight daily. In the first five months, the facility had more than 15,000 users, significantly reducing waste on downtown streets and runoff into the watershed. The Downtown Alliance and Public Works Department are developing a recommendation for the purchase and installation of one or more permanent restrooms in the next City budget cycle.

BIRD CONTROL SERVICE

We continued our commitment to mitigate bird waste throughout the Downtown PID through a contract with Texas Bird Services (TBS). The TBS team patrols the PID nightly and uses non-harmful methods to dissuade migratory birds from roosting in trees along downtown sidewalks. Since implementing this program in 2008, there has been a 95 percent reduction in roosting bird populations and bird droppings. This has kept sidewalks clean and welcoming for downtown pedestrians and has supported efforts to activate sidewalks with increased pocket parks, coffee shops and outdoor dining.

Enhancing Parks and OPEN SPACES



Master Plans and Other Long-Term Initiatives

OUR GOAL

Establish a public-private partnership for Republic Square that will serve as a model for implementing and sustaining the vision for Austin's urban squares. Great public spaces increase the appeal, livability and economic vitality of urban spaces. Downtown's parks, squares and public spaces are not yet living up to their full potential.

OUR PROGRESS

OUR AUSTIN STORY
Brush Square, Republic Square, Wooldridge Square and Congress Avenue were Austin's original public spaces. Since the 1800s, events held there have shaped our city's unique culture and politics. Yet this rich

history is little-known to the public. The Downtown Austin Alliance, in partnership with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PAR), is bringing light to this hidden history through Our Austin Story, a comprehensive interpretive plan for telling the stories of downtown's public spaces to the world. We hope the themes of Austin's past will help people better understand our present and our future.

Together with certified interpretive planner Ted Lee Eubanks, we spent 2017 gathering stories from Austinites through an extensive public engagement campaign. We complemented this with in-depth historical research. We will share these stories through signage in the squares and along

Congress Avenue, as well as through venues such as cultural events and online guides.

The Republic Square signs are scheduled to be installed by Summer 2018. They will immerse visitors in the square's history as the epicenter of Austin's Mexican and Mexican-American community and food culture—a precursor to today's Farmers' Market Downtown.

REPUBLIC SQUARE

Republic Square reopened to the public in October 2017 after an extensive yearlong renovation. Through a unique public-private partnership, the Downtown Alliance, Austin Parks Foundation (APF), and PAR partnered to

revitalize the park. The Downtown Alliance now manages the operations and programming of this historic public space. For more information, see spotlight on page 54.

BRUSH SQUARE

We worked with PAR to advance a master planning process for Brush Square that kicked off in early 2018. We also continued to provide funding for overnight, private security at Brush Square and its O. Henry Museum and Susanna Dickinson Museum.

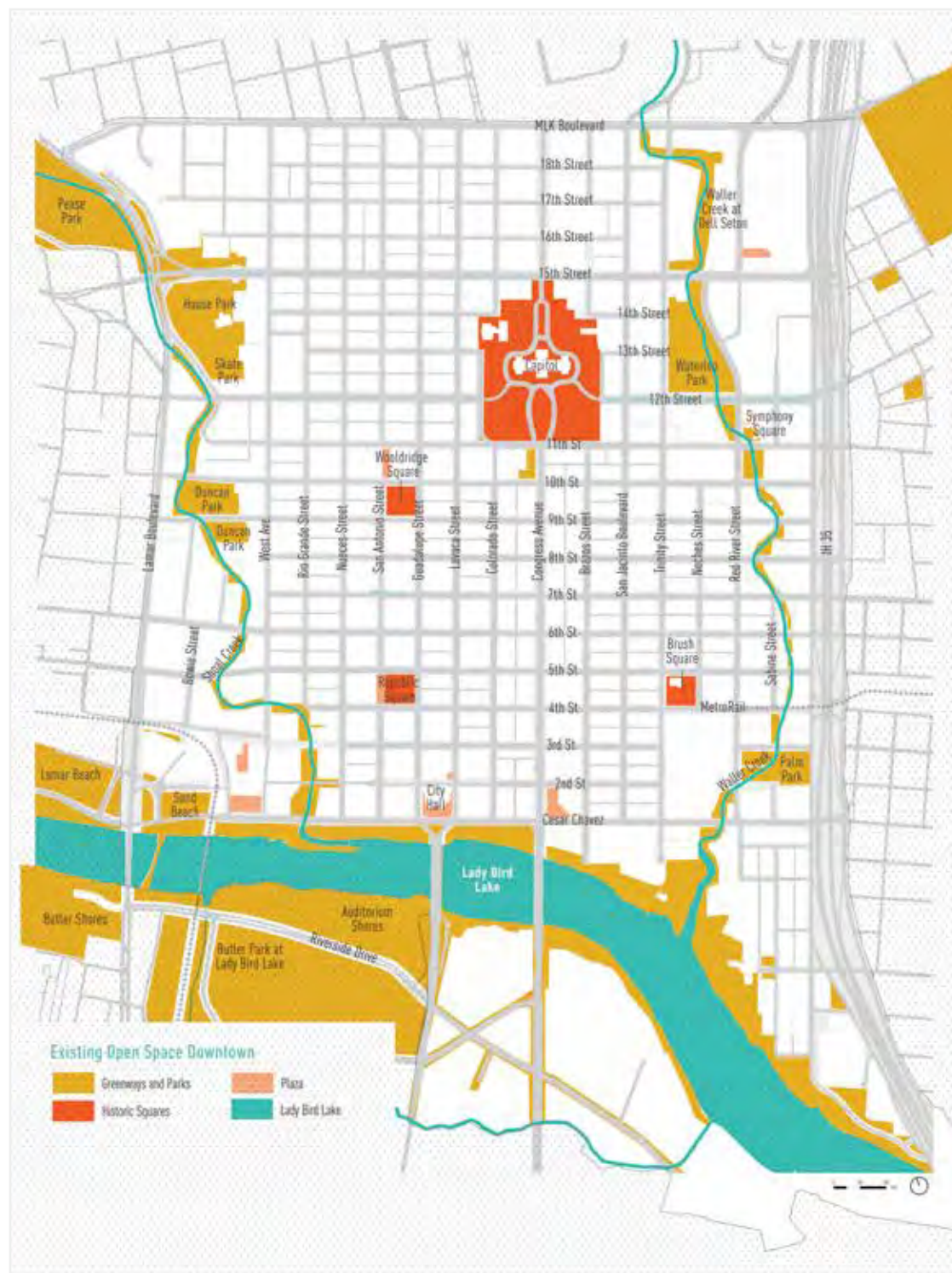
OTHER PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Additionally, we provided financial support to several partners:

- \$25,000 contribution to APF to support its work to improve Austin's parks
- \$25,000 toward the Shoal Creek Conservancy's trail plan
- \$10,000 to the Sustainable Food Center to support its Farmers' Market Downtown



Above: Kids enjoy a snow machine at the Holiday Sing-Along and Downtown Stroll. Photo by Erika Rich; Right: Blackbird. Public Artwork in Republic Square by Kincannon Studios



PARKS AND OPEN SPACES
equate to about

20%
of downtown,
including the lake

Most downtown residents and employees are within a 5-minute walk of a park or plaza.

STREETS
make up

32%

and represent some of the most underutilized opportunities of the public realm.

SPOTLIGHT:

Downtown Parks and Public Realm Inventory

Building on our downtown development capacity analysis (see page 16), in 2017 the Downtown Austin Alliance commenced a complementary study to understand the current state of downtown’s public realm. The public realm is composed of the places between buildings—such as parks, plazas, squares, natural areas, streets, sidewalks and civic places—where public life and experiences play out.

Public life plays a significant role in making a city desirable. People depend on contact with others. Cities are about people and the energy that comes from being near one another. A vibrant and successful public realm is a network of connected public places that provide the foundation for social engagement, whether active or passive, that is at the core of humanity.

Lively, enjoyable public spaces make a city come alive and profoundly influence how people feel and act within it. A great public realm can encourage walking and cycling. It can entice people to stay longer and explore further. It can promote spontaneous encounters, unexpected synergies, and chance learning. And it supports and inspires local culture, arts and creative thinking.

The Downtown Alliance’s parks and public realm inventory surveyed downtown Austin’s existing and planned public spaces, noting the size, location, distribution and type of each. This baseline inventory lays the foundation for future work around understanding the public realm.

As of 2017, more than 50 percent of downtown’s land area was devoted to public realm. Streets (public rights-of-way) make up 32 percent of downtown’s land

area. Lady Bird Lake equals 9 percent and approximately 11 percent is devoted to more formal parks and natural open space.

As downtown Austin continues to grow vertically, its stakeholders need to understand the public realm so we can identify needs and opportunities for enhancing it, thus elevating downtown’s status as a great and livable place. Today some of the most transformative changes in the world’s cities are happening in public spaces.

Right: Visitors enjoy the Auction Oaks Deck at Republic Square



SPOTLIGHT:

Republic Square

Republic Square has been an important gathering place for Austinites since the days the city was still named Waterloo. In 1839, Judge Edwin Waller, architect of Austin's first city plan, stood under the square's live oaks as he auctioned off the first lots in order to fund construction of government buildings for the Republic of Texas's new capital. Republic Square, along with its majestic Auction Oaks, were named for this important event.

By the turn of the 21st century the space had become worn and underutilized. Through a unique public-private partnership, the Downtown Austin Alliance, Austin Parks Foundation (APF), and the Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) have partnered to renovate the square and elevate its status once again as an important gathering place in the heart of downtown Austin.

After a yearlong, \$5.8 million renovation, the square reopened to the public in October 2017. Its soil and turf were completely replaced to create an inviting new great lawn for events. New landscaping, public art and eating areas throughout the square create a "front yard" for downtown residents and workers, along with a respite from city life. A new Market Promenade serves as the new platform for the Sustainable Food Center's Farmers' Market Downtown. A full-service café will open in late 2018. And entirely new irrigation, electrical and lighting infrastructure support all of the park's activity.

Now that the renovation process is complete, the Downtown Alliance manages Republic Square's daily

operations, maintenance and programming. We held a series of Holiday Pop-up Markets in December 2017 featuring local artisans, yoga classes, and food trucks. The square is staffed by a dedicated Republic Square Ambassador from open to close each day to keep the grounds clean and provide hospitality to guests.

The square's design and activity represent the culmination of an extensive master planning process and capital campaign. The Downtown Alliance worked with PAR to help coordinate the public engagement process that shaped the master plan and also made a \$500,000 contribution to the APF-led capital campaign.

Republic Square is also designed to support the City of Austin's sustainability goals and will be the first of the City's parks to be qualified as Zero Waste. The square's landscape architecture firm, Design Workshop, specified low-water native plants, which are watered using the City's reclaimed water program. Native limestone and surface materials, along with energy-saving LED lights, further minimize natural resource usage and maintenance costs. Republic Square is also pioneering the use of silva cells, an underground soil framework that supports large trees and absorbs runoff from rain. This increases air and water quality and also enables trees to live longer and grow larger shade canopies. So visitors to Republic Square will stay cool under those Auction Oaks for the coming century.

For more information on Republic Square's features and upcoming events, visit its new website at republicsquare.org.



Engaging the DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY



Advocacy

HOMELESSNESS OUTREACH STREET TEAM (HOST)

The Homelessness Outreach Street Team (HOST) continued in 2017 after a successful pilot program in 2016. The Downtown Austin Alliance brought together Austin Police Department (APD), Austin-Travis County EMS, Integral Care, Community Court and local social service providers to create HOST in 2016. The interdisciplinary team of police officers, behavioral health workers and paramedics proactively engages people living on downtown streets and attempts to connect them with critical services – thereby reducing crises and increasing public safety.

In its first full year of operation, HOST interacted with 784 different people – many on a repeated basis. The results included:

- 921 connections to social services (shelter, case management and other services)
- 69 diversions from hospital emergency rooms
- 30 diversions from emergency psychiatric facilities
- 26 diversions from criminal justice
- 147 connections to mental health services
- 55 connections to substance use treatment

Above: The Community's Table event at Kenny Dorham's Backyard.
Opposite: Central Library's grand opening.
Photo courtesy of Austin Public Library

First! Village. This master-planned community is being developed by Mobile Loaves & Fishes. Phase I began operating in 2016 and currently provides affordable, permanent housing and a supporting community for nearly 200 formerly chronically homeless men and women. When the project is complete, it will house more than 1000. The grant is the largest in the history of the Downtown Alliance, and also the largest ever for Mobile Loaves & Fishes.

In January 2018, Integral Care broke ground on Housing First Oak Springs, Austin's first Housing First apartment community. Upon completion in September 2019, Oak Springs will provide 50 permanent supportive

housing units, with an on-site medical clinic and other supportive services for people who are chronically homeless. The Downtown Alliance made a \$150,000 matching grant as a leadership capital campaign contribution, which generated an additional \$150,000 in private contributions.

The Downtown Alliance is a longtime advocate for Housing First permanent supportive housing as a proven best practice for addressing chronic homelessness. This approach provides people who are chronically homeless with permanent housing as a first step toward stability, in addition to robust support services to meet clients' needs. We continued to advocate for the City Council's

five-year goal of creating 400 units of permanent supportive housing, 200 of which will be Housing First units.

PAY FOR SUCCESS

In 2016, the Downtown Alliance allocated \$25,000 to support Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) in structuring Pay for Success, an investment vehicle that is anticipated to generate \$15-17 million in private investment to fund service costs for 250 Housing First clients. Pay for Success will reduce the use of public systems such as jails, hospital emergency rooms, homeless shelters, and emergency psychiatric centers. ECHO is working to secure funding from governmental entities, charitable foundations and others.





Pay for Success will provide a return on investment as specific project metrics are met. It is anticipated to begin generating funds in 2018.

AUSTIN RESOURCE CENTER FOR THE HOMELESS

ECHO, the Austin Police Department, City of Austin Public Health, Downtown Austin Alliance and social service providers, with leadership from Austin Mayor Steve Adler and Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo, launched a 30-day pilot at Austin Resource Center for the Homeless (ARCH). The pilot's purpose was to test ways to reduce overcrowding and to improve cleanliness and safety in and around the emergency shelter. APD stationed two officers near the ARCH around the clock to cut down on drug dealing and other crimes, and the Downtown Alliance funded the installation of portable restrooms and increased cleaning. Service providers increased their presence, added

lighting and implemented new safety measures. They also changed the distribution of free meals to serve only clients. The pilot successfully reduced crowding, 911 calls for APD and EMS dropped significantly, and the area remained cleaner.

The Downtown Alliance is working with the Public Health Department, ECHO, service providers and the broader community to redesign the scope for the next ARCH management contract that goes into effect Oct. 1, 2018. The National Alliance to End Homelessness is working with local stakeholders to support this redesign, providing technical support and best practices on social service systems and shelter management.

CODENEXT

The Downtown Alliance continued to participate in CodeNEXT, the City of Austin's multiyear initiative to revise the land devel-

opment code. This code provides the rules and processes that regulate how land can be used throughout the city. To determine how the proposed code would affect downtown, the Downtown Alliance's CodeNEXT task force reviewed each of three drafts, compared them with the Downtown Austin Plan and Imagine Austin, and participated in the AIA Austin CodeNEXT charrettes that applied Drafts 1 and 2 of the code to actual sites. We submitted written feedback on each draft and met with city staff and consultants to communicate high-level and detailed recommendations. Our capacity analysis shows the built square footage of downtown could double, and the new code needs to make this possible. We support a new code that increases downtown density and adds new housing units. It should also provide flexible approaches to creating more street-level vitality, context-sensitive approaches to building near historic buildings or districts, and creative approaches to keeping what is

special and unique about downtown. We are also working with Evolve Austin, a coalition of organizations dedicated to the implementation of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, to help shape the group's overall position on CodeNEXT. The Downtown Alliance is proud to be part of the coalition working to ensure opportunities to build diverse, affordably priced housing across the city and to enable the development of dense transit corridors feeding into downtown.

I-35 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Downtown Alliance strongly supported "Capital Express," a plan for I-35 improvements proposed by Texas Senator Kirk Watson and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) in October 2017. The proposal calls for adding two managed express lanes to I-35 in each direction, spanning from Buda to Round Rock, as well as lowering the highway through downtown

Austin—creating underground lanes in some sections and capping the roadway with parks or pedestrian walkways. The Downtown Alliance supports this lowering because it would not only improve mobility but would also dramatically improve our entire community's quality of life. In 2017, we led a public engagement campaign to submit more than 2,440 letters to TxDOT in support of the lowered option. We also testified to the Texas Transportation Commission. While Texas officials declined to advance the project at this time, we will continue to advocate for the lowered option.

DOWNTOWN PUZZLE

In July 2017, Austin Mayor Steve Adler proposed a solution to the "Downtown Puzzle," his name for the interconnected and geographically contiguous challenges in the eastern part of downtown Austin. His plan calls for harnessing downtown

economic activity, including an expansion of the Austin Convention Center and an increase of the city hotel occupancy tax. This would "unlock" funding for needs such as providing permanent supportive housing for the homeless, building a chain of parks along Waller Creek, completing the next phase of the Mexican American Cultural Center, preserving historic buildings, and supporting live music.

Downtown Alliance President and CEO De Peart served on the City of Austin Visitor Impact Task Force, which formally recommended that the City Council finance the expansion of the Convention Center by increasing the city hotel occupancy tax without any impact on Austin's general fund. The Council decided not to vote on the matter but rather to have The University of Texas at Austin spend 2018 conducting a study of potential models for the Convention Center's expansion.



Opposite: Bill Brice and Mayor Pro Tem Tovo participate in a panel addressing the issue of homelessness; Left: Creek Show presented by the Waller Creek Conservancy. Photo Courtesy of Leonid Furmanky Architectural Photography

Communications

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Downtown Austin Alliance worked diligently to stay current on all downtown-related issues and events and kept the community informed through strategic public relations campaigns, presentations and events, social media, email updates and our website. We regularly contacted reporters to brief them on downtown issues, and the Downtown Alliance was mentioned in 322 news stories in 2017.

We continued to coordinate with partner organizations, such as the City of Austin, Austin Police Department, Austin Parks Foundation and Capital Metro, to coordinate our communications efforts on joint issues.

REPUBLIC SQUARE WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

With the opening of Republic Square in October 2017, the Downtown Austin Alliance built and launched a dedicated website for the park at republicsquare.org. We also created and maintained an e-newsletter and accounts for Republic Square on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

The Downtown Alliance's leaders regularly spoke to community organizations about downtown issues, projects and the area's overall economic impact. Our leaders were also invited to speak about downtown's economy and the Downtown Alliance's success stories at more than 20 local and national industry events, including:

- Austin Parks and Recreation Department, Video for ATXN: March 2017
- Women in Transportation Seminar: May 2017
- The Get Up, Let's Talk About Homelessness Panel: June 2017
- ACT International Conference: August 2017
- City of Austin, Innovation District: September 2017
- Inherit Austin, Our Austin Story: October 2017
- City of Austin, Using Data to Tell the Story of

- Downtown Austin: October 2017
- Bisnow, Future of Downtown Austin: December 2017

ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

We regularly organized and hosted engagement events for our members and other interested parties. These events enable attendees to hear city and community leaders discuss the hottest issues facing downtown, and to provide their input.

- Get Ready for SXSW 2017: Community Info Session: February 2017
- Downtown Austin Parking Strategy: April 2017
 - Workshop Luncheon
 - Meeting for Retailers and Business Owners
- Our Congress Avenue Launch: April 2017
- XYZ Atlas: Experience Congress Avenue Celebration: April 2017
- Congress Avenue: Transform! (but first, tacos): June 2017
- Community First! Village Book Party and Reception: July 2017
- Downtown Vision Engagement Events: Fall 2017

SPONSORED EVENTS

Additionally, we also sponsored downtown-related events held by our partners.

- Austin Tech Alliance, Tech Town Hall featuring Mayor Adler: August 2017
- Austin Chamber of Commerce, Regional Growth Summit: October 2017
- Austin Parks Foundation, Party for the Parks: October 2017
- Congress for the New Urbanism Central Texas Chapter, Annual Luncheon with Carol Coletta: November 2017

Community First!
Village Aerial, Photo
Courtesy of Mobile
Loaves & Fishes.

OUR COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: 2017 Reach

WEBSITE:
downtownaustin.com

269,638 UNIQUE VISITS
445,496 PAGE VIEWS

WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER:
This Week in Downtown
7,299
subscribers

@DowntownAustinAlliance
15,575 FOLLOWERS
15% increase over 2016

@DowntownATXInfo
6,721 FOLLOWERS
5% increase over 2016

@downtownaustin
2,318 FOLLOWERS
16% increase over 2016
(All numbers as of March 1, 2018)

IN THE NEWS

322

total mentions
in 2017

219,545,185

impressions

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Financial REPORTS

2016-17 Audited Financial Statement

Combined Statement of FINANCIAL POSITION

FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 2017

Assets	
CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,382,531
Investments	1,589,881
Accounts Receivable	18,918
Deposit	9,073
Prepaid	21,391
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	3,021,794
Property & Equipment, net of depreciation of \$714,624	116,917
TOTAL ASSETS	3,138,711

Liabilities and Net Assets	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	313,542
Accrued Expenses	349,336
Deposits Held in Custody	50,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	712,878
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted Net Assets	
Unrestricted Net Assets	2,425,833
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	—
TOTAL NET ASSETS	2,425,833
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	3,138,711

2018-2019 Service Plan and Budget
http://www.downtownaustin.com/sites/default/files/FY18-19_DAA_Budget_ServicePlan_Final.pdf

(Approved by the Austin City Council Aug. 10, 2017)

Left: Creek Show presented by the Waller Creek Conservancy. Photo Courtesy of Leonid Furmansky Architectural Photography

Combined Statement of ACTIVITIES

FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 2017

CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Revenue & Other Supports	
Public Improvement Revenue	\$ 5,182,888
Contributions from City of Austin	60,000
Contributions from Travis County	25,000
Membership Dues	4,990
Interest Income	6,006
Contributions	42,704
Contract Services/Management Fees	219,228
Other Supports	37,660
TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORTS	5,578,476
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	—
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	5,578,476

Expenses	
PROGRAM SERVICES	
Congress WOW	305,419
Mobility	429,122
Historic Squares	688,625
Downtown Draws	265,303
Clean and Safe	2,215,674
Economic Development	289,103
Strategic Capabilities	1,289,012
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	5,482,258
SUPPORTING SERVICES	
General and Administrative	385,383
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	385,383
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,867,641
Increase (decrease) in Unrestricted Net Assets	(289,165)

CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	
Contributions	—
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	—
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	(289,165)
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	2,714,998
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	2,425,833



Downtown Austin Alliance TEAM



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Instagram: @republicsqatx

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AUSTIN TOWN
ALLIANCE**

17
18

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