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Sketch Plan by R/UDAT leader Chuck Davis, illustrating a significant part of the team's recommendations for Downtown

R/UDAT REVISITED - 1997

"A CALL TO FINISH"

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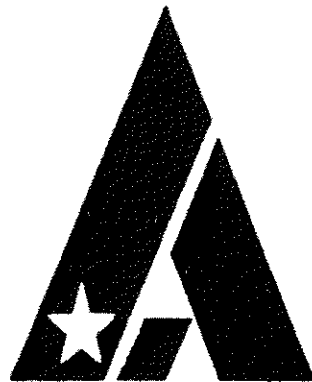
City of Austin



DOWNTOWN AUSTIN ALLIANCE

A Vision and a Voice for Downtown

Downtown Austin Alliance



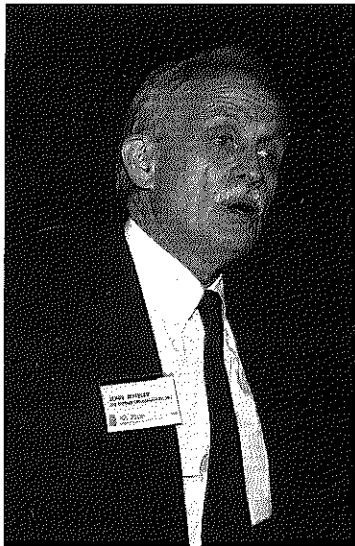
Greater Austin
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Austin Chapter of the
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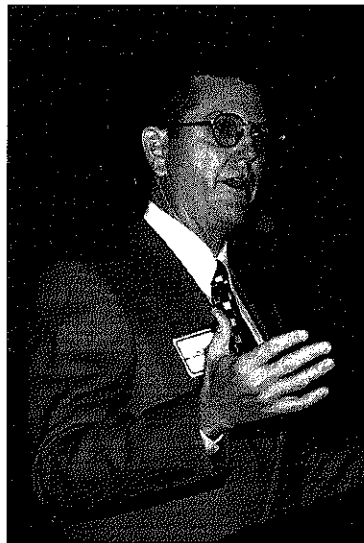
R/UDAT PROGRAM EXPLANATION

The American Institute of Architects has been sending Regional/Urban Design Assistance Teams to cities since 1967. The design teams respond to the problems described by the local AIA chapters and other sponsors from the community. Each R/UDAT professional is selected based on experience in the problems under study. Members are not compensated for their services and agree not to accept commissions for work resulting from their recommendations.



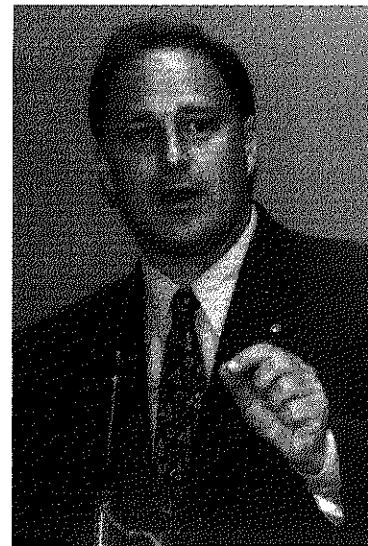
John Nyfeler

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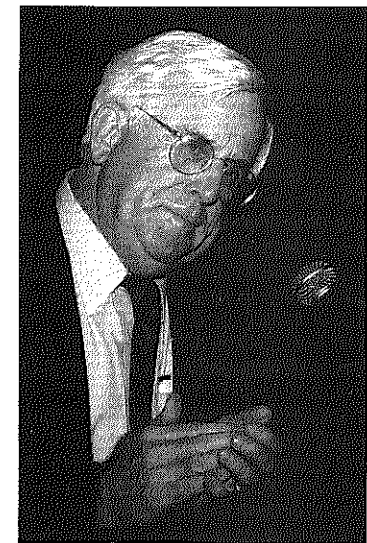
Tom Stacy

Downtown Austin Alliance



Mayor Kirk Watson

City of Austin



Pete Winstead

*Greater Austin Chamber
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R/UDAT REVISITED - 1997

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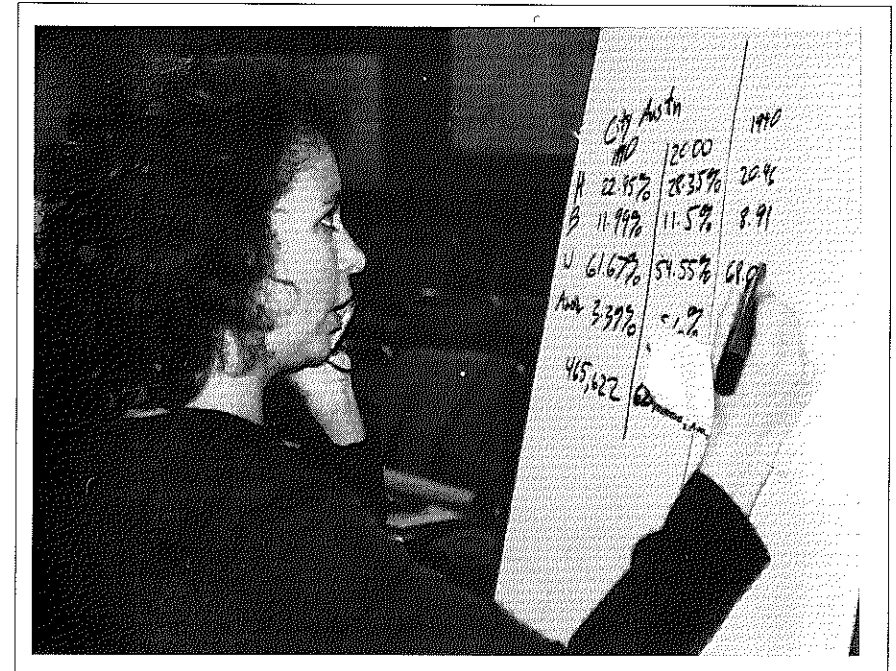
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OPPORTUNITY AREAS

On September 24, 1997, all Austinites were invited to participate in R/UDAT Revisited: A Call to Finish at the Austin Convention Center. Almost 500 citizens responded and participated in this follow-up session to the 1991 visit by the Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team from the American Institute of Architects.

R/UDAT Revisited included six morning breakout sessions :

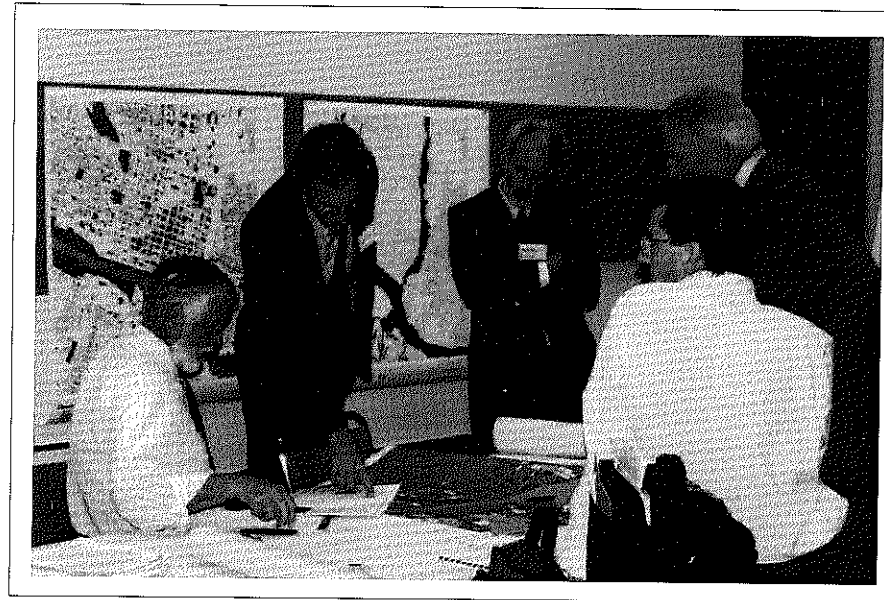
- I. Organization, Marketing & Management
- II. Natural & Built Environment
- III. Markets & Economic Potential
- IV. Transportation
- V. Community Issues: Arts & Human Services
- VI. Regulations & Government Policies.



Seven of the eight original 1991 R/UDAT team members came back to Austin from around the country. The team met with participants, reviewed the R/UDAT Status Report, and identified top priority Downtown opportunities.

The event and this report were produced by the Austin R/UDAT Revisited Committee composed of original 1991 R/UDAT chairs and participants, Mayor Kirk Watson's office and other City of Austin departments, as well as current Board members and staff of the Downtown Austin Alliance, Austin Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce.

OPPORTUNITY AREAS



The focus of R/UDAT Revisited is finishing the work begun with the first R/UDAT visit. The opportunities for action reflect the R/UDAT team's best judgment of how Austin could move forward on the best projects for Downtown in the near future within the framework of the original R/UDAT report.

The R/UDAT team recommended that opportunity areas for Downtown be based on these fundamental principles:

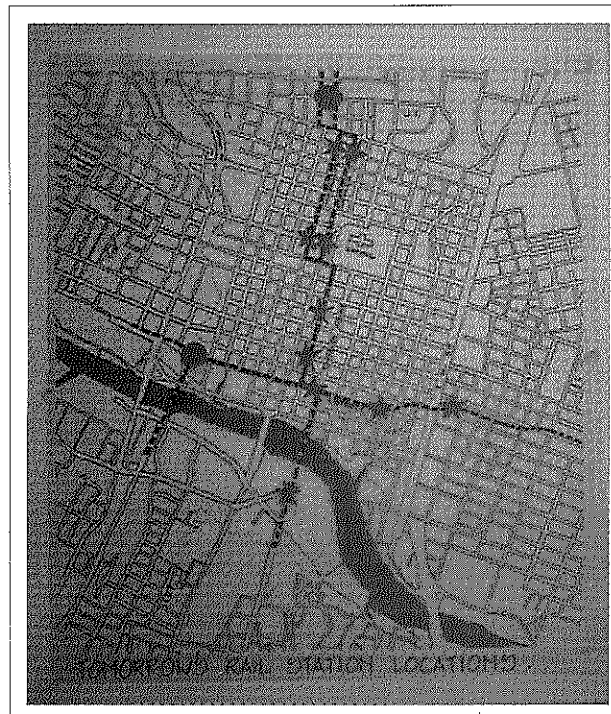
- Keep the list small and get the projects done
- Choose projects with the following elements: a high degree of potential for success; leverage to produce spin-off results; a tangible impact; and an acceptable public cost

OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Building a record of success invites public confidence in future projects. Leveraging projects is important financially as well as politically. People need to see results. The City will benefit if a project generates adjacent and related investments.

The R/UDAT team identified five projects for Austin:

- 1— Mixed-use residential development on the City's waterfront site, with civic and public uses including a bona fide City Hall. The site might be expanded to include properties currently owned by the State that are expected to be available in the near future.
- 2— Convention Center expansion supporting tourism and entertainment
- 3— Transit Links including light rail and Great Streets
- 4— Waller and Shoal Creek areas should include both residential and public sites. Creek belt projects need to be completed and maintained.
- 5— Performing Arts Complex at the Palmer Auditorium site, with the condition of private sector funding.



One theme that appeared in all sessions was that of leadership. Austinites expressed frustration over the ease with which projects can be stalled and the difficulty of actually getting anything finished. In every session, proponents of action called for leadership to bring the City together, get past the obstacles, and work together on creating a great Downtown. As Mayor Watson reminded participants, Downtown is the living room of Austin. It is what the visitors see, where we entertain, and where we put our image forward to the world. Creating a great Downtown is good for all citizens of Austin, and indeed of the entire Central Texas Region.

OPPORTUNITY AREAS

In this report, each section contains the R/UDAT Revisited team recommendations, an overview of progress since the original R/UDAT, and a summary of the discussion at the corresponding session at the conference. The discussion and the overview were the basic data for the R/UDAT team, who then met in the afternoon and developed recommendations. The morning discussions were thus input to the R/UDAT process, not generators of the recommendations.

R/UDAT Revisited builds on the original R/UDAT work. In the first R/UDAT, approximately 800 Austinites from all segments of the public and private communities participated in a three-day planning session resulting in the original R/UDAT Report, followed by the locally developed implementation guide, Call to Action.

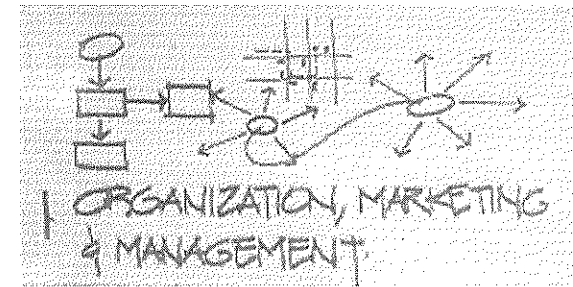
The appendix to this report contains the recommendations from the original R/UDAT report and from the subsequent Call to Action. These first two reports were used to assess what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. R/UDAT Revisited is no longer a Call to Action. It is a Call to Finish the development of a truly Great Downtown.

SESSION ONE :

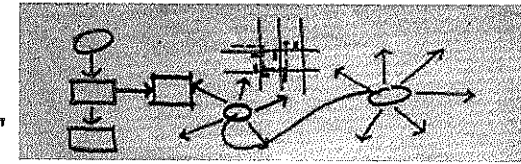
ORGANIZATION, MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

R/UDAT REVISITED VISION STATEMENT

1. Balance a traditional commercial sector with visitor activities and a viable residential community
2. Ensure a secure and comfortable Downtown environment
3. The pieces exist; create linkages to Capitol Complex, UT, and adjacent neighborhoods
4. Market Downtown to Austin's regional population



ORGANIZATION, MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT



OVERVIEW

The formation of the Austin Downtown Management Organization, now known as the Downtown Austin Alliance, is the major accomplishment. The Alliance has developed marketing and management plans and programs for Downtown following the R/UDAT vision. Marketing programs are coordinated with the Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau, which has become a private nonprofit corporation. Events in Downtown seem plentiful, but are not part of an overall strategy or plan. It is not clear that the Austin community would welcome centralized direction as opposed to free-market entrepreneurship in the area of events.

The major tasks left undone in this area include:

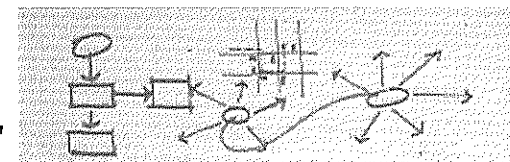
- Development and implementation of a marketing plan for Downtown, based on a thorough market analysis. Analysis of the potential market opportunities in Downtown is needed for targeting the best projects for Downtown.

The Alliance has deferred work on this area in the interest of building membership. Establishing Downtown as a community, getting the basics of cleanliness and safety in place, and creating the organizational infrastructure have taken priority.

- Targeting state and university employees. The Downtown community, including these groups, is only beginning to be aware of the plethora of retail, entertainment, and service venues in Downtown.

Maintenance problems continue to plague Downtown. Responsibility is fragmented; city budgets for horticultural services have been cut, and most services are reactive to complaints rather than preventive of problems.

ORGANIZATION, MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

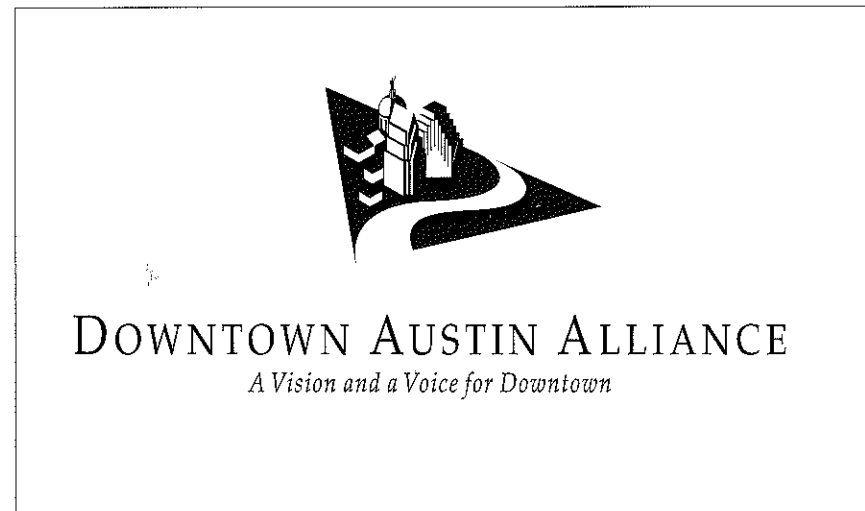


DISCUSSION

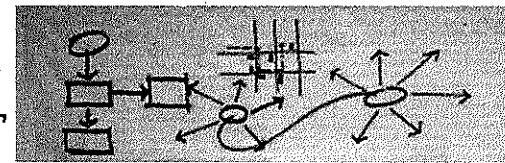
Although the Downtown Austin Alliance has achieved a noticeable improvement in the cleanliness and safety of Downtown, several areas still need improvement.

One area is the communication between the Downtown community and its adjacent neighbors. Marketing Downtown to Downtown employees is the highest priority, but marketing to and coordinating with the adjacent neighborhoods is also very important to the success of Downtown. Downtown is everybody's neighborhood. It is the place where everyone comes together.

While the entire community has a stake in a vital Downtown, there is not uniform awareness of this fact. Downtown advocates need to do a better job of articulating the connections between Downtown and the larger community. Downtown businesses need to improve marketing in the entire region, especially to families.



ORGANIZATION, MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT



Downtown needs a neighborhood events section in the local media. Downtown events need better coordination, especially with adjacent neighborhoods. Downtown's safety and cleanliness need to be communicated to the regional community.

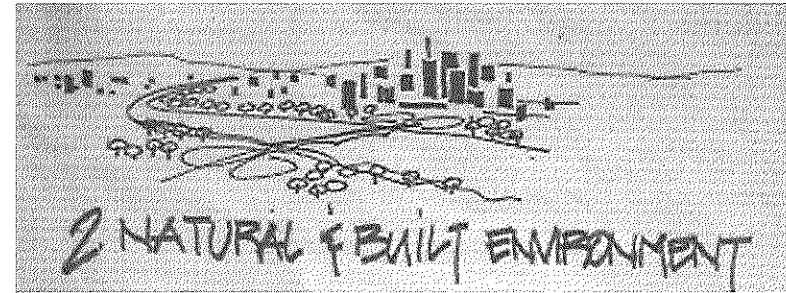
Downtown issues are focused too much on short term and not enough on the long term. Downtown needs transit, linkages, signage, and infrastructure to be truly family-friendly.

Downtown needs to balance uses so that commercial, residential, entertainment, and retail uses comfortably coexist. The inevitable conflicts need to be mediated for this vital Downtown mix to succeed.

The City needs to be involved with the nurturing of the Downtown community as well as being a large component of the employment base. A civic center, such as a ceremonial city hall, would help civic pride and civic presence.

SESSION TWO :

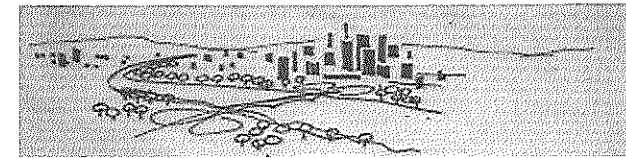
NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



R/UDAT REVISITED VISION STATEMENT

1. Complete and repair Waller and Shoal Creeks - then maintain the investment.
2. Expand the Convention Center
3. Maximize Downtown housing opportunities
4. Strategic use of City-owned properties - housing and civic uses.

NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



OVERVIEW

Austin has preserved its green environment in the City. However, overall parks maintenance has deteriorated, due to budget cuts. Downtown's parks and green spaces are not as clean, well-planted, and nurtured as they were five years ago. Neither Waller nor Shoal Creek is a better place. An engineering study of Waller Creek has allowed the City and other adjacent property owners to begin work on financing flood control and back-flow pumping to transform Waller into an urban waterway. If successful, Waller Creek could achieve its potential as an urban amenity. A Shoal Creek Master Plan is underway, led by the Austin Metropolitan Trails Council.

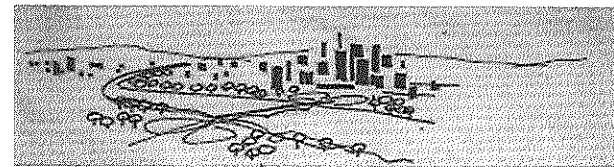
The built environment's major change has been the renewed investment by new owners of many Downtown buildings. The Driskill and Stephen F. Austin hotels are being renovated. New owners and tenants, especially from the software and media industries, are filling vacant space. Businesses are more aware of Downtown; even relocations from the suburbs are occurring!

There have been several achievements in the regulations of the built environment:

- Sidewalk Cafes are now allowed under City ordinances.
- Residential uses are now allowed under Downtown zoning;
 - > single family and duplex housing is allowed in Central Business District (CBD) and Downtown Mixed Use (DMU) zones
 - > one residential unit is allowed as an accessory use.
- Zoning and land use code reforms were enacted in the Central Urban Redevelopment Combining District (CURE) ordinance.
- Great Streets program is making progress on several projects including
 - > The Driskill corner project.
 - > The 200 block of Congress sidewalks and street furniture.
 - > The Barton Springs-Congress Avenue triangle landscaped gateway .

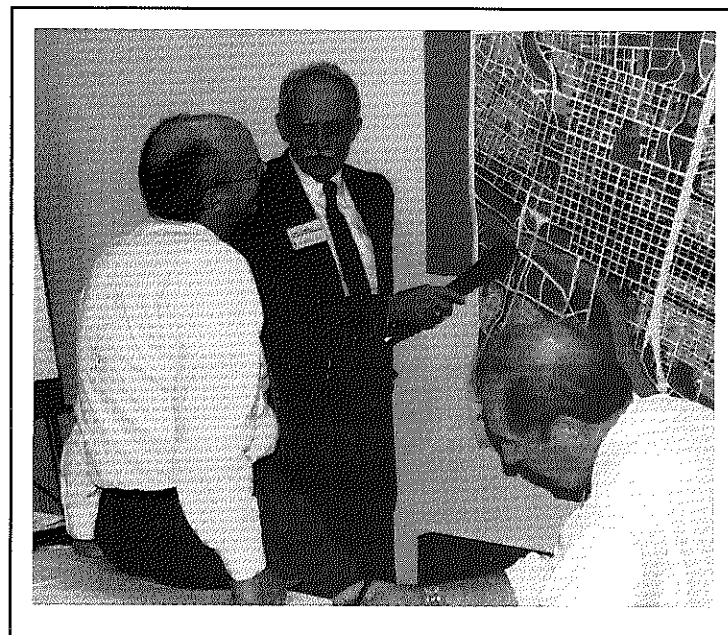
The definition and development of Downtown Districts, and linkages of Downtown elements are still on the agenda.

NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



DISCUSSION

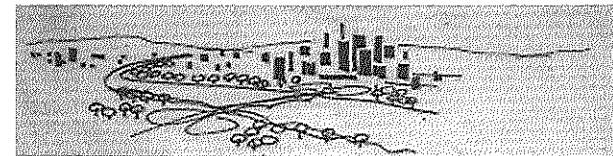
The two waterways, Shoal Creek and Waller Creek, were extensively discussed, both in terms of their contribution to Austin's green space and as settings for urban development. Both creeks are underutilized on both fronts, but recent planning efforts are moving Austin closer to realizing the potential of these urban creeks. The proposed Waller Creek tunnel project would allow flood control, erosion control, and a constant water level. Development of residential and retail uses along Waller Creek would become possible. Shoal Creek is in an earlier planning stage.



Support for development Downtown is coupled with concern for preserving the Town Lake greenbelt and our urban parks. Maintenance of both is critical, especially as other projects and upstream developments increase the impact of urbanity on the natural environment.

The City has significant resources in Downtown that could be engines for development within a green context. Several Downtown parks, now generally neglected, have the potential to be urban amenities— Republic Square, Palm Park, Wooldridge Square, Rush Square, and Waterloo Park. The challenge is to develop urban parks for the Downtown community, not just grass areas scattered through the built environment.

NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Maintenance budgets have been cut over the last several years; both the parks and the greenery of Downtown streets show the effects. The planters on Congress Avenue are bereft of seasonal flowers and the sidewalk plantings along Trinity are overgrown. Proposals for new projects should be accompanied by plans for maintenance.



Possibilities for development of the Seaholm Power plant were discussed, with some sort of museum being favored.

Shade and appropriate pedestrian infrastructure are critical to Downtown development. Parking problems as well as lack of pedestrian amenities may make development in the core of Downtown more difficult. Development at the edge of Downtown may support increased core Downtown development or it may compete for it. Creating conditions for development within a green context in Downtown Austin will determine where the private sector sees opportunities for development.

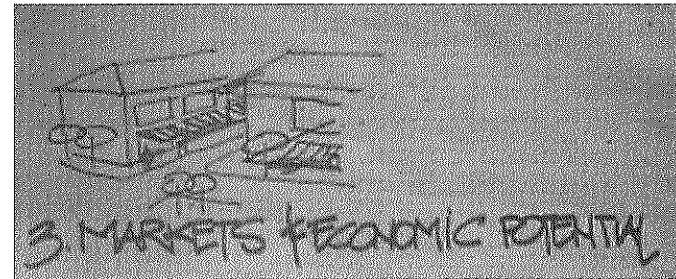
The proposed Convention Center expansion would allow Austin's already successful facility to compete for more and larger events. Since the Convention Center expansion would be financed by revenue bonds, this project would not be an obligation of the City's general fund.

SESSION THREE:

MARKETS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R/UDAT REVISITED VISION STATEMENT

1. The City must take the lead in this area
2. There is a strong market for housing
3. Convention Center is successful as an economic machine
4. Major retail projects require public funds
5. Successful public/private partnerships require the "right" first projects



MARKETS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



OVERVIEW

The private sector has been energetic in Downtown over the last few years. Housing, retail, hotel renovation, and increased building occupancy are all in evidence. With the exception of a tax abatement for one housing project, the public sector has not been active in development downtown. After a promising start with a consultant developing a strategy for public participation in the revitalization of Downtown, City efforts seem to have stalled. The City's four and a quarter block area is the largest tract of underutilized land in Downtown Austin under the control of a single owner.

Private developments include:

- The Brown building at 8th & Colorado— conversion of unoccupied office space to 80+ apartments. Scheduled to open in 1998
- The Brazos Lofts at 5th & Brazos: conversion of unoccupied retail space to 40 condominiums. Scheduled to open in 1998.
- Housing projects in the planning stage at 9th & Lamar, Cesar Chavez and Lamar, Rainey Street, 400 block of East 5th Street, and 800 block of Red River.

Possible mechanisms for public participation in Downtown development, including tax increment financing, redevelopment authority, and tax abatements are still under discussion.

MARKETS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



DISCUSSION

Topics discussed in this session were as follows:

- Residential demand in Downtown
- Retail possibilities Downtown
- Convention center expansion
- Parking
- Public participation in Downtown development

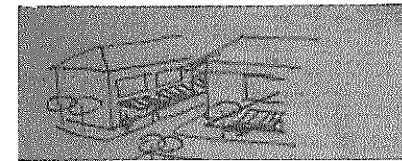
The experience of the almost complete Brown building and the Brazos lofts reveals a demand for Downtown residential. However, the depth and range of housing demand is unknown. A similar problem exists for retail development. A marketing study of Downtown employees is needed for planning future development Downtown, especially given the shifting composition of Downtown employment from primarily government to private jobs.

In most, if not all, cities, substantial Downtown retail and residential developments have only happened with public participation. The public sector provides infrastructure for private development, with or without explicit economic incentives. In Austin, explicit economic incentives such as tax abatements are politically very difficult. However, the public provision of infrastructure may be possible. Mechanisms such as tax increment financing (TIF) districts could be used for such investments.

Austin has a successful Convention Center that returns money to the City and the local economy. However, the public perception is that this project is costing the taxpayers money. The proposed expansion is politically difficult until the public understands the economic returns from that expansion.

Parking is seen as a major problem for Downtown development. Developers in the 6th & Lamar area cite parking concerns as their major reason for locating there instead of more centrally. The convention center's lack of convenient parking has been an issue since opening day. Any expansion should include adjacent parking. Similarly, residential and retail development must include some provision for parking. The public sector could provide parking designed to be multi-use. For example, residential parking could be open to the public during the day. Alternatively, the 45,000 existing off-street parking spaces could be managed more efficiently.

MARKETS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Any project with any public participation must have consensus political support. But Austin knows what it doesn't want more than what it does want. The first project involving public participation needs to be a showcase success. Such a project will also have to endure intense public scrutiny at all stages. Austin needs to see positive results on the first investment of public funds. Too often, the people have felt that their tax dollars have been used to subsidize the interests and profits of a few.

Economic development of Downtown should also include the entire community. Austin's diversity does not have to be divisive. Community involvement in Downtown development is a strength for Austin.

Downtown development of existing buildings should also receive attention. The private sector's current system of independent marketing of properties may not be as efficient as a coordinated system, such as that of a retail mall. For example, Congress Avenue or East Sixth could be treated more as a meta-mall instead of as mere separate addresses. Coordination could be done through various mechanisms, such as the Urban Main Street program.

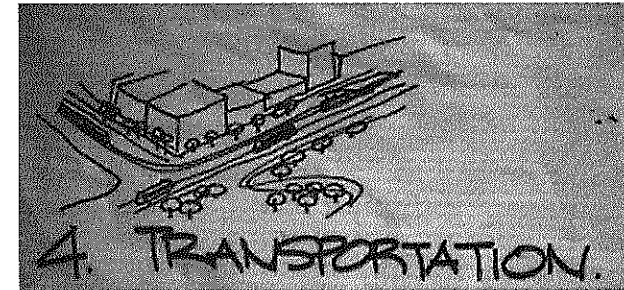
Possible projects for public participation include:

- Developing the City's lakefront land in the southwest quadrant of Downtown,
- Waller Creek flood control project,
- Performing Arts Center,
- Downtown residential development
- Downtown retail center.

The next five years represent a unique opportunity for Downtown development. Austin can come together on Downtown investment or watch the central city compete in an increasingly uneven battle with the suburbs. Downtown development is more difficult as well as more costly than suburban development. Sprawl is the result, but it is not inevitable. The compact city requires planning and investment to happen and the experience of other cities shows that center city growth can be economically feasible, given political commitment. Growth of Downtown is also a fiscally prudent way to grow the tax base of the City.

SESSION FOUR :

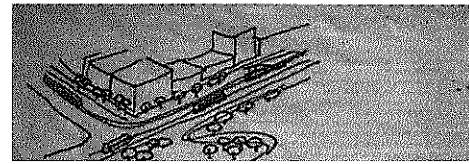
TRANSPORTATION



R/UDAT REVISITED VISION STATEMENT

1. Get rail transit to Downtown, Capitol Complex and UT
2. Create a comprehensive Downtown parking management plan
3. Traffic calming - convert some one-way streets to two-way
4. Downtown access - complete the sidewalk system

TRANSPORTATION



OVERVIEW

Planning progress has been made on issues of Downtown access and mobility.

- Planning of the reconstruction of IH-35 through Downtown Austin now includes a proposed alternative that enhances the Downtown and its linkages to East Austin.
- Ensuring Western Access to Downtown while significant development occurs in the Western End of Downtown includes proposals for split-grade intersections at Lamar and 5th and 6th Streets. Alternative proposals developed by the Old West Austin Neighborhood Association (OWANA) to address its concerns about traffic and development are also under study.

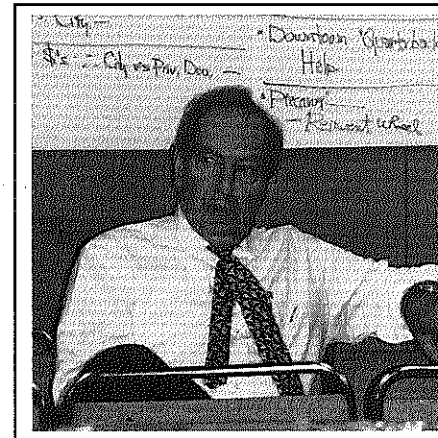
Parking is named as the biggest weakness of Downtown in Alliance surveys. In response, the Alliance's Coordinated Parking Plan aims to use existing parking more efficiently, since the 45,000 off-street Downtown parking spaces are used overwhelmingly by commuters driving alone. Even a small increase in alternative commuting habits would free up significant amounts of parking. The City has recently instituted parking meter reform that has simplified the meter system.

Capital Metro is planning light and commuter rail. Current plans are based on existing track both east and west of Downtown. There is great interest in connecting the University, the State Capital Complex, and the new airport (opening mid-1999) with transit.

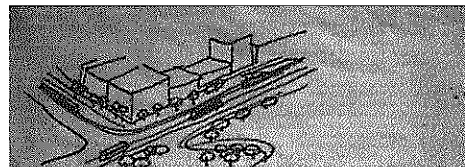
The Downtown Mobility Action Plan (DMAP) delineated issues for Downtown transportation planning. During

1998, detailed plans for transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles will be developed under Capital Metro's leadership.

The issues associated with one-way versus two-way streets have been discussed in various contexts. Only Cesar Chavez east of IH-35 has actually been changed from one-way to two-way.



TRANSPORTATION



DISCUSSION

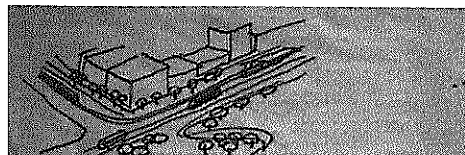
Five major transportation issues were covered in this session:

- Rail Transit
- Parking
- Traffic calming—two-way streets
- Linkages—'Dillos, pedestrian infrastructure
- IH-35 in Downtown

Rail Transit— Participants agreed on the need for rail transit in Austin. However, the agreement ended there. Some said, "Build it now! Get something on the ground!" Others felt that the first rail transit line needed to be a success and so needs the right alignment and the right stations. There was a lively discussion of the relationship between light rail and land use. The Austin Transportation Study's report on Transit Oriented Development provided examples of what is possible for rail in Austin. The potential for light rail to shape development depends on building light rail in the right place and on appropriately dense land use around the stations. Austin wants rail, but Austin does not have a commitment to an the initial configuration Whatever configuration is selected, the importance of connecting the major centers of Downtown to the system from the beginning was emphasized by many speakers.

Parking— Parking is perceived as the biggest weakness of Downtown Austin. However, the issues of what kind of parking, where, and how parking should relate to transit, employment centers, and land use are not clear. Proposed solutions include: more parking garages, better employee parking policies, public parking information, satellite parking with shuttles, better transit, and more residential development. Some of the problem occurs in the transition between an empty Downtown and a lively Downtown. People who are accustomed to empty free parking now face scarce paid parking. Parking will be the focus of improvement efforts for some time to come. No other issue is more important to the success of Downtown.

TRANSPORTATION



Traffic Calming— The previous R/UDAT had recommended conversion of some Downtown streets to two-way. Participants agreed that the community has to decide whether the priority is moving traffic through Downtown or making Downtown the destination. Destination Downtown requires slower, calmer traffic and more focus on pedestrians within Downtown. Austin needs political leadership to guide traffic changes through the inevitable controversy. It was also noted that two-way traffic is only one technique for traffic calming. The only conversion in the last six years to two-way from one-way was in East Austin, on East Cesar Chavez.

Linkages— The initial R/UDAT focused on the need for linkages Downtown. The major centers of the University, the Capital complex, and the Downtown core are not fully connected. People in one center don't move easily to the others. 'Dillo service needs to be more frequent and more reliable. All modes of transit use need to be integrated with the 'Dillo system. Perhaps a Downtown free fare zone should be implemented.

Linkages also depend on the pedestrian environment. Streetscapes need to shelter pedestrians from the sun, protect them from traffic, and invite them to walk. Basic accessibility for all in the Downtown pedestrian environment is essential. Downtown has places with no sidewalks, places with broken and uneven sidewalks, and places where sidewalks are blocked by traffic standards, signs, etc. Linking Downtown centers to each other and to the rest of Austin requires investment in infrastructure and coordinated planning.

Access—IH-35 is now a major NAFTA corridor, as well as a major access route to Downtown Austin. It is also still a barrier between Downtown and East Austin. TxDOT is currently considering several alternative configurations for IH-35. These include the Alliance alternative (endorsed by the City Council) consisting of depressed main lanes and boulevard frontage roads. High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes would also be included. Another problem is Western access to Downtown as development along major corridors occurs.

Summary— As Austin continues its rapid growth, Downtown access requires transit, roadway, parking and streetscape investments for a Destination Downtown linked to the community.

SESSION FIVE:

COMMUNITY ISSUES: ARTS AND HUMAN SERVICES

R/UDAT REVISITED VISION STATEMENT

Arts -

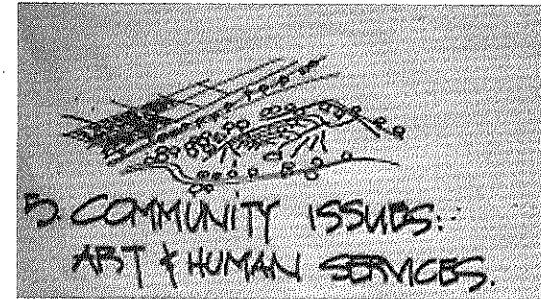
Criteria to choose art investments:

1. Promotes Downtown - helps achieve the "critical mass"
2. Leverages private funds
3. Produces near-term results
4. Promotes ethnic diversity and pride

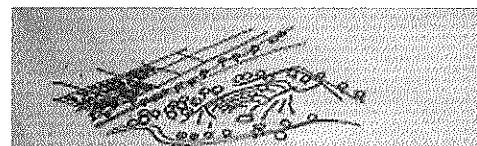
Human Services -

Expand and accelerate cooperative approach to human service issues:

1. Recruit public sector leadership and increase funding
2. Work toward model community-wide solutions



ARTS AND HUMAN SERVICES



OVERVIEW

Arts— The Paramount Theater is a cultural anchor of Downtown. The State Theater is being renovated and operated by the Live Oak Theater Company. The Austin Children's Museum will move soon to 2nd & Colorado. Bond money is authorized for the Austin Museum of Art, the Mexican American Cultural Center, and the Carver Cultural Arts Center. Operational funding issues have not been resolved. The Austin Museum of Art has relocated to a temporary Downtown location.

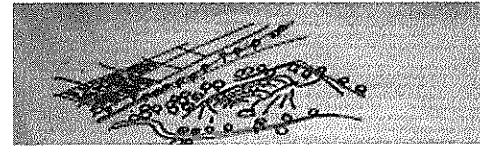
The proposal to retrofit Palmer Auditorium as a Performing Arts Center may be included in the City bond package on the ballot next year. (There is also a possibility that the private sector will raise the funds for this project.) The Seaholm power plant continues to be a site with great potential. The Texas Fine Arts Association has purchased and is renovating the building at 7th & Congress.

Overall, the arts in Downtown are lively at the smaller scale and lacking at the larger end of the scale. Small theater groups, galleries, music venues, and visual art spaces are widespread. The museums, cultural centers, and large performing arts spaces that one expects to find in a City of Austin's size are not yet present.

Human Services— Downtown continues to struggle, as does the whole community, with issues of human services. The Salvation Army has come to be accepted as a partner in Downtown, but Downtown is opposed to more social services being located in the Downtown. The Day Labor Site has not been successful at containing workers and employers in a single location. The City's Day Labor Site Task Force has recommended improvements to the program so as to draw employers and laborers to the site. The Homeless Task Force report recommended a centralized homeless campus such as the one in Orlando, Florida. Questions of need, funding, efficacy, and operations have not been resolved. Other components of the Task Force's report may take priority over the campus proposal.

Austin has adopted community policing and zero tolerance of public disorder. The ordinance prohibiting camping on public property has been opposed by advocacy groups but staunchly supported by neighborhood associations.

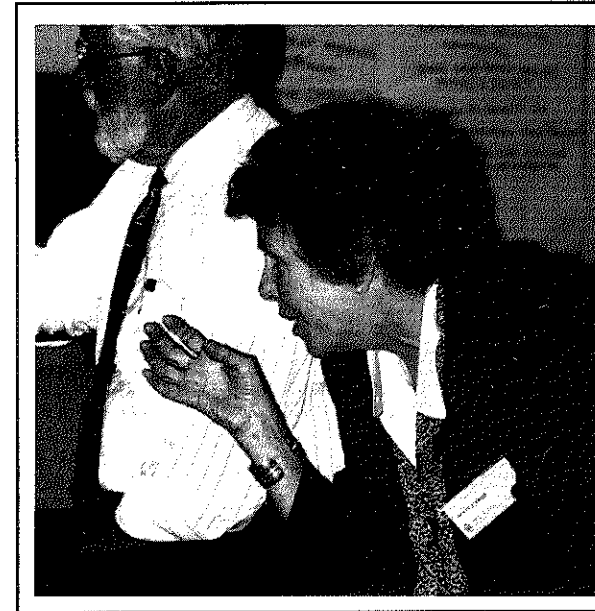
ARTS AND HUMAN SERVICES



DISCUSSION

Arts— In many Downtowns, arts facilities are the single strongest components of revitalization. In Austin, a major performing arts center (CPACS) is urgently needed. (The performing arts groups are currently using a University of Texas facility that will not be available a few years hence). There was no disagreement on the need for such a facility, but some on the location and funding. Although some wanted a PAC to be north of Town lake, others felt that redevelopment of the 18-acre Palmer Auditorium site on the south shore reinforces Town Lake as the center, not the edge, of Downtown. The Palmer retrofit is also projected to be roughly half as expensive as building a new facility.

Visual arts venues in Austin were discussed, primarily in terms of the need for all elements of Austin's diverse community to be involved in such venues. Although the City has an Austin Comprehensive Arts Plan, it has not been implemented and needs updating. Inclusion of all arts groups and all components of the community is important in the planning and developing of arts in Austin. Existing museums, such as MexicArte, need to be included in the planning. Austin does not have a science or technology museum, which is surprising given the large and growing technology sector of the local economy.



The economic impact of the arts business in Austin is not always well appreciated. The live music sector is well known. It is, however, only one of the arts that contribute to Austin's economy and define our culture. Public support of the arts has been discussed almost exclusively in terms of City of Austin general obligation bond funding. Private sector contributions could be expanded, perhaps with the use of a united arts fund.

The visual and performing arts were generally well represented at this session. However, there were few representatives of Austin's live music scene. This is disappointing as most of the venues for the live music capital are in Downtown.

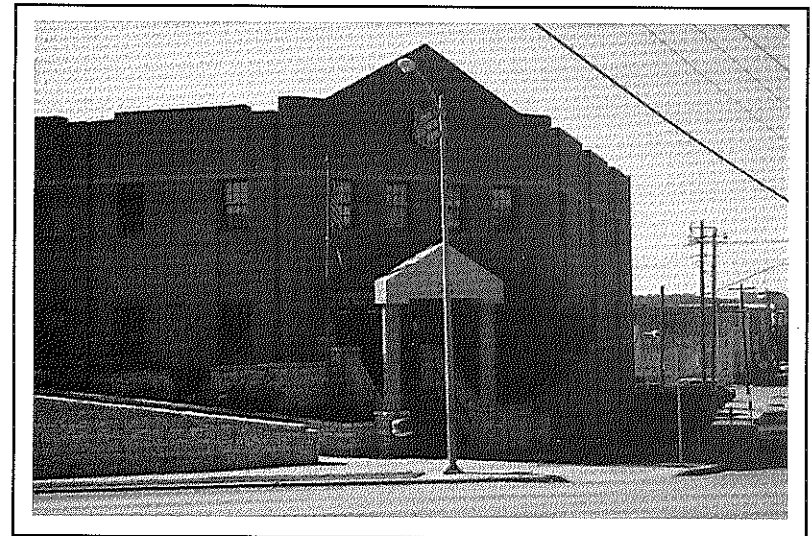
ARTS AND HUMAN SERVICES



Human services— All cities struggle with the problems of homelessness. These problems, although regional, are most visible in Downtowns. In Austin, as in many other communities, the problem of public order has been confused with the problems of the less fortunate. Disorderly behavior is unacceptable in any community, regardless of the status of the violator. Providing needed services in the community does not imply disregarding basic rules of civic behavior. Provision of services and locations of providers need to be decided in a community context, with the needs of the neighborhoods taken into account. The provision of social services can take place in ways that do not create problems for the neighbors of those services.

Although Austin has had many task forces to review the problems of the homeless, the community still does not have good information on the size and composition of the homeless population, nor on the most effective and efficient means of meeting their needs. Some proponents of a "homeless campus" feel that centralizing services is the best approach. Others feel that the most urgent need is for comprehensive detoxification facilities, or transitional housing, or even affordable housing in general. Some talk in terms of families, some in terms of single adult men, who often have an alcohol or drug abuse problem. Austin does not have community consensus on these issues.

However, Austin does have an overall positive consensus that the community needs to move forward on these issues. The community also has an asset in the Community Action Network (CAN) as a coordinating body for the funding and service-providing agencies. The CAN has a Task Force charged with developing priorities on homeless issues.

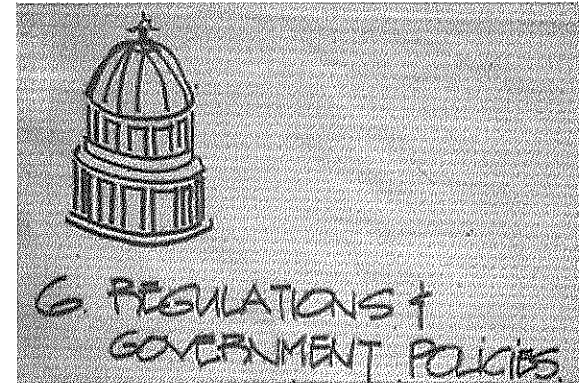


SESSION SIX :

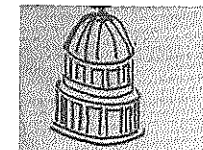
REGULATIONS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES

R/UDAT REVISITED VISION STATEMENT

1. Establish a shared, city-wide vision for Downtown
2. Define the City's role in Downtown
3. Provide the leadership to create a "make it work" attitude for projects that support the vision
4. Reduce regulatory constraints to achieving the vision



REGULATIONS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES



OVERVIEW

The City of Austin has passed several ordinances addressing some of the minor R/UDAT recommendations:

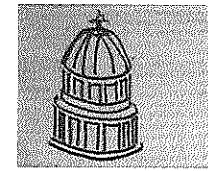
- One dwelling unit is now permitted as part of any principal commercial use.
- Sidewalk cafes are now legal, under certain circumstances.
- Canopies are now legal in Historic Districts.
- The Central Urban Redevelopment Combining District (CURE) allows modified site development standards and fee waivers.
- Elimination of parking requirement for any use of less than 6000 square feet in Downtown.
- Creation of an East Austin Overlay District. Production of an East Austin/Land Use Zoning Study.
- Creation of the Austin Revitalization Authority to address revitalization in the East 11th and 12 Street corridors.
- The adoption of the Uniform Conservation Building Code, which accommodates remodeling historic buildings.

There is no master plan or design guidelines for Downtown and no City-created special districts. There are several National Register Historic Districts.

The development process for Downtown still suffers from code and enforcement attuned to suburban growth. The Citizens Planning Committee and its successor, the Citizens Planning Implementation Committee, have made some progress in identifying problems and moving towards solutions. Downtown still needs both an alternative code and a simplified process for development.

R/UDAT also called for development of a Downtown plan; this did not happen.

REGULATIONS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES



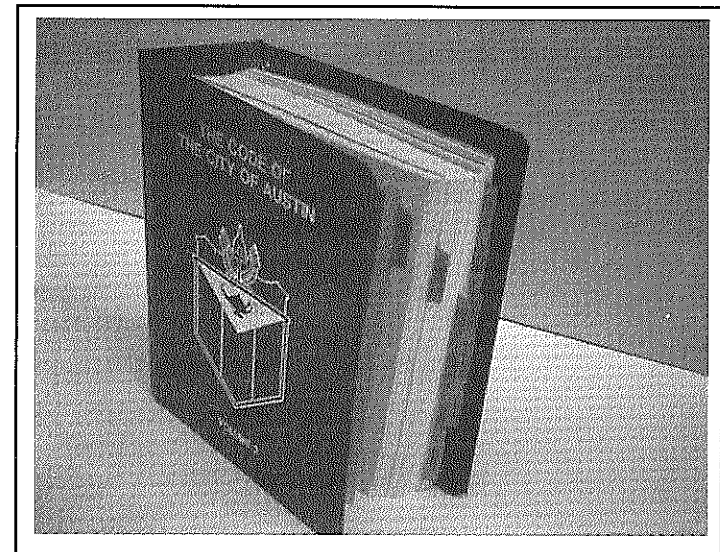
DISCUSSION

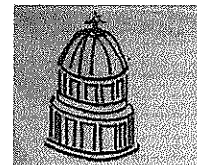
Austin seems deeply divided on what role the government should play in Downtown. There is no consensus vision and no strategy guiding government actions. Development in any Downtown is more difficult than development of raw land. However, there are ways to ease the problems. Building codes can encourage redevelopment or hamstring it. Code enforcers can facilitate or kill redevelopment. The choices are those of public policy and its implementation. For example, Houston has a Downtown expediter in the City government to facilitate Downtown projects.

The goal is development as a partnership of the City, the developer, and the neighborhoods, all guided by a shared vision. The reality is deep distrust of developers by neighborhoods, a permitting process that most developers find antagonistic, and suburban sprawl booming while Downtown redevelopment lags.

The participants in the session suggested the following elements of a shared vision for Downtown:

- more people living Downtown,
- a diverse market,
- pedestrian-friendly streets,
- trees,
- cultural facilities,
- preservation of historic buildings,
- development of the City's property, including a City Hall and mixed-use residential-retail.

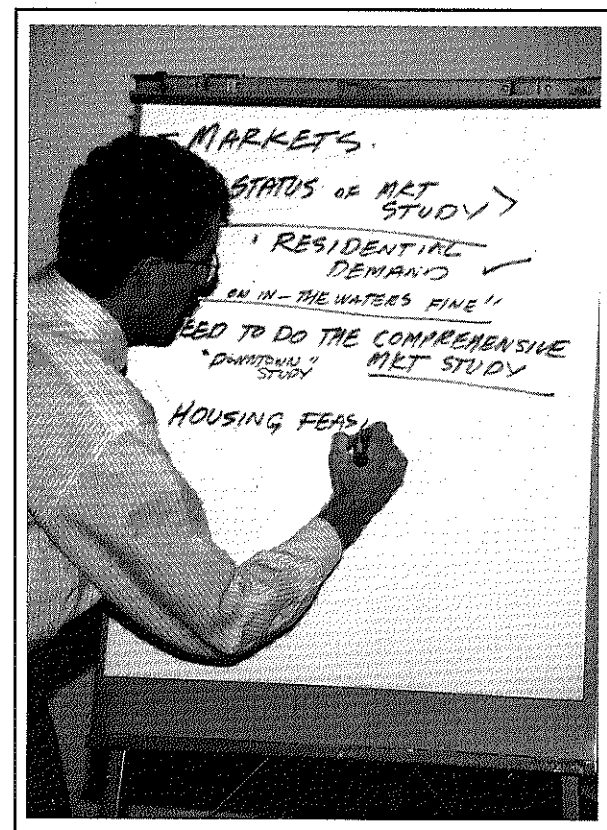




REGULATIONS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES

The highest priority is realizing that a vision including these components is a partnership between the City, the developers, and the neighborhoods. Then proposed developments that are consistent with the vision of the City and the neighborhoods need a positive response from the regulatory bureaucracy. "How can I help you?" needs to replace "You can't do that." Only then will Austin's Downtown realize its potential.

Over the last three years, Austin has made a start on these changes with the Citizens Planning Committee and its successor, the Citizens Planning Implementation Committee. These two citizen groups reviewed city development processes in detail and listed necessary changes. The City has responded to these; most visibly, three experiments in neighborhood planning are underway.



A CALL TO FINISH

In the six years since the original visit of the R/UDAT team, Austin has made real progress on Downtown revitalization. Working cooperatively, the public and private sectors have accomplished many of the proposals of the first R/UDAT Report.

Now it is time to finish the job. Austin's Downtown has a window of opportunity in the next five years better than any in the last decade. While the region's economy is growing, the great Downtown can be created. Achieving the major recommendations of R/UDAT Revisited will require effort from all Downtown stake holders. Downtown Austin is the economic, cultural, social, and historic heart of the Central Texas region. As such, Downtown deserves the investment and continuing care worthy of the region.

The five projects identified by the R/UDAT team for immediate focus are as follows:

- 1— Mixed-Use Residential on the City's Waterfront Site, with Civic and Public Uses including a bona fide City Hall. The site might include properties currently owned by the State that are expected to be available in the near future.
- 2— Convention Center Expansion that supports tourism and entertainment
- 3— Transit Links including light rail, and Great Streets
- 4— Waller and Shoal Creek area should include residential and public sites. These projects need to be completed and maintained.
- 5— Arts Complex at the Palmer Auditorium, with the condition of private sector funding.

A CALL TO FINISH

To make these projects happen will require realization of the themes heard in all sessions of the recent R/UDAT Revisited:

Linkages

Investment

Leveraging

Implementation

Leadership

The R/UDAT team has given Austin the map and issued a Call to Finish. The Austin community can now respond to that call and make Downtown Austin the great center of a great city.



APPENDIX:

*R/UDAT 1991 and A CALL TO ACTION -
RECOMMENDATIONS AND STATUS*

R/UDAT 1991 and A CALL TO ACTION - RECOMMENDATIONS AND STATUS

SYMBOLS USED IN THIS REPORT:

✓	=	Done
✗	=	Not done
+	=	Partially complete
✎	=	In plan, in progress, or underway in some form
*	=	Either no longer desirable or the story is too complicated to symbolize

SESSION I : ORGANIZATION, MARKETING, AND MANAGEMENT

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Downtown Austin must have an advocate and manager that is not part of city government or the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce.

The success of R/UDAT ☆ AUSTIN as a long-range planning tool is dependent on the creation of a Downtown Management Organization (DMO) to become Downtown Austin's advocate and manager. Goals of R/UDAT ☆ AUSTIN established a need for an organization responsible for leadership, promotional, management and financial concerns of Downtown Austin.

✓

Development of a goals statement for downtown and prioritization of the steps needed to achieve them;

+

Advocacy on behalf of downtown in political and community forums

Advocacy in political and community forums

✓

Implementation of a program of marketing and promotions for downtown;

It should develop a year-round marketing program and schedule of promotions.

+

Development and oversight of downtown management initiatives such as a retail retention and recruitment program or enhanced maintenance and security

The DMO should be responsible for the development and oversight of Downtown management initiatives, such as retail retention and retail recruitment, based on desired mix and location such as concentrating specialty retail tenants unique in the market in the area north and west of the Convention Center.

+

Coordination of activities with the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and sponsors of major downtown festivals

+

Review of university and governmental projects affecting downtown

✗

Assurance of linkages between various activity centers in downtown

✗

Assurance of outreach to neighborhoods adjacent to downtown and their involvement in downtown economic life

Promotion as Austin's urban neighborhood

⇒

There are clear needs for additional services and management functions in downtown Austin. They range from more police patrols, more frequent street cleaning, better signage and more amenities in major pedestrian corridors, to more services for the homeless, management of business recruitment and retail practices such as hours, and special promotions

Focused efforts to solve human resource issues

⇒

SESSION I : ORGANIZATION, MARKETING, AND MANAGEMENT

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
A year-round marketing program and schedule of promotions and special events is essential if downtowns are to compete successfully for new businesses, tourists and conventioners, and the affection and patronage of their hometown residents	Implementation of a program of promotions, both joint and individual, can be coordinated through the DMO.	*
The programming of public and private spaces needs to be arranged and coordinated with existing festivals and other outside events. Owners of successful downtown businesses should be enlisted to help recruit new businesses. Loan programs, tax abatements, and other aids to new business should be well-publicized along with basic statistical information on downtown buying habits	We strongly recommend structured plans for festivals and special events in coordination with the specific City departments and private organizations. Develop the public, non-profit/for-profit partnerships that will be required, and establish a Director of Cultural Affairs within the Downtown Management Organization (DMO) to oversee the implementation and coordination of these recommendations.	*
Special marketing efforts should be directed to state office employees and university students	Heritage tourism and marketing is an essential tool for developing Downtown and East Austin. Programs to make the historic sites more interesting, accessible and attractive must be developed. Develop tourist programs capitalizing on existing historic sites and attractions such as the Capitol and the nine national register districts. Special emphasis should be placed on the areas within easy walking distance of Downtown. Continue support of the Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Historic Landmark Commission in their ongoing efforts of preservation, heritage services and marketing.	+

SESSION I : ORGANIZATION, MARKETING, AND MANAGEMENT

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Guides to downtown stores, restaurants and entertainment must be prepared and placed in hotels and transportation centers.
Downtown businesses and workers should be provided with the same information

Expand visitor information services through a new visitor center located in Downtown.
Continue to develop and promote various free walking tours for visitors at regularly scheduled times as well as on special requests.
Develop a new historic walking tour for children.
Develop a new historic/anecdotal tour of East Sixth Street which features historical interpretations of buildings as well as stories about the street and its heritage.
Develop a tour of the Sixth Street area west of Congress Avenue.
Work with Capital Metro and Sixth Street businesses to arrange for the use of an open-air tram and create linkages between Downtown and the historic amenities in East Austin.
Develop driving tours of historic Hispanic Austin and historic African American Austin.
Support the initiation by ACVB of a Forum of Heritage related businesses and organizations to organize and coordinate their efforts to the mutual benefit of all of the historic community in Austin. Such a forum could be used to identify marketing opportunities which cross individual property boundaries or public and private sector activities.
Develop a guide to Bed and Breakfast establishments in the inner city.
Continue the national marketing program which features historic opportunities in Downtown and in East Austin.
Expand the marketing of the "Walk Of The Town" cassette.
Continue to develop new historic brochures.
Continue to provide funding for preservation and restoration of historic sites and buildings.
Install historic markers on appropriate buildings in Downtown and increase the use of text markers to provide visitors with greater access to interpretive information.
Expand the historic banner program to include Congress and the Bremond block and to create linkage between the Capitol and the Convention Center.



SESSION II : NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
New planning should adopt a realizable framework for development which emphasizes the role for downtown districts and linkages. Congress Avenue, Sixth Street, and the Convention Center are major organizing elements.	Complete linkages to the Convention Center, shopping areas, and eating, entertainment, parks and historical areas within the Downtown area, with a strong emphasis on pedestrian movement.	+
While the park and open space framework surrounding downtown is a strong organizing element, the internal pattern of public open space is not. New development should include an internal system of downtown open space that helps organize the urban form.	New development should include an internal system of Downtown open space to help organize the urban form.	+
Create regulations that encourage first floor activity and retail business opportunities.	Revise development regulations to allow unique features of traditional Austin architecture prohibited by current regulations. Create regulations which encourage first-floor activity and retail business opportunities.	+
Because of the significant number of historic buildings in Austin, the City should consider special building code provisions to cover these unique conditions.	Consider special building code provisions to address historic buildings.	+
The fragmenting of downtown is further complicated by a lack of connections between districts. The R/UDAT team strongly encourages planning proposals such as the current East Sixth Street Plan, and Trinity Street proposal for a pedestrian greenway as contained in the Convention Center proposal. These ideas help to connect the various elements in a logical framework.	Natural linkages between Town Lake, Waller Creek, Shoal Creek, the Convention Center, the State Capitol and other parts of Downtown Austin should be enhanced and maintained.	⇒
The R/UDAT team believes that the downtown traffic patterns could be reevaluated and some one-way streets eliminated to the advantage of street level merchants and pedestrians alike. Although some efforts have been made, many Austin streets still lack pedestrian amenities that would make them comfortable pedestrian environments. Chief among these missing amenities are canopies and awnings to provide shade, wide sidewalks, trees, and street furniture.	Make streets more pedestrian comfortable through the provision of canopies, awnings, wide sidewalks, trees, street furniture and pocket parks.	✗

SESSION II : NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
Create incentives to maintain and improve use of existing buildings.	Adopt, with the Historic Landmark Commission, meaningful regulations which contribute to the preservation and reuse of historic buildings to enhance the character of Downtown.	✗
Begin steps to make Congress Avenue the best boulevard in Texas. Adjust zoning regulations to allow design to fit the downtown vision.	Recognize Congress Avenue as the Grand Boulevard of Texas. Amend zoning regulations to allow design to fit the Downtown vision. Complete the sidewalk upgrade of the 200 block of Congress.	⇒
	Complete the East Sixth Street improvements to create a pedestrian environment that is comfortable, safe, interesting and visually attractive. Initiate the two-way traffic conversion.	⇒
	Provide a meaningful and identifiable system of multimodal linkages throughout the city that are sympathetic to the human and natural environment, strengthen identity and orientation, promote an Austin character and encourage a walking environment.	✗
Give more than lip service to making the streets accessible to the disabled.	Retrofit existing infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the handicapped. Encourage businesses to consider the needs of the handicapped within their locations.	⇒
Future downtown development should build on the already significant natural park and open space investment Austin has made at Town Lake, Shoal and Waller Creeks. Town Lake and the two creeks form a natural frame on three sides of downtown that should be enhanced and reinforced. Future emphasis in these areas should be on clean-up, repair, refinement, and access improvements that enhance an already established amenity.	Improve access to Town Lake and the Rainey Street area park by realigning Red River Street south of First Street and by improving signage.	⇒
Water quality and water conservation concerns dictate that irrigated lawns and plant beds in much of the Town Lake Park system be kept to a minimum. We believe that the special urban character of the downtown area make it an exception. Measures should obviously be taken to minimize environmental impacts, but the quality of site improvements and grounds maintenance in this area should be the best available.	Increase landscaping and maintenance of Town Lake along the urban waterfront including frequent mowing, increased planting and irrigation of flower beds, and litter control and abatement in the park and in the lake. Increase hike and bike trail maintenance and erosion control measures. Clean and maintain Waller Creek from Town Lake to Martin Luther King Boulevard. Purchase and provide personnel for a "trash barge" for Town Lake. Increase planting and maintenance of Brush Square. Increase litter control and abatement in and around Shoal Creek.	✗

SESSION II : NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

The portion of Town Lake Park along First Street represents a major public amenity that anchors the south end of Congress Avenue. The park represents a potential retail market just as the park represents a significant amenity that can encourage future development. Due to its potential to set the image of Downtown Austin as a world class urban place, this lakefront immediately south of downtown should receive special attention. The Austin Parks and Recreation Department has an ongoing program of maintenance and improvements that should be encouraged. With close proximity to hotels and the new Convention Center, this portion of the lakefront should receive the highest level of maintenance. To the extent possible, seasonal color beds, irrigated lawns, and generous pedestrian ways should be developed in anticipation of high volumes of pedestrian use. The proposal to separate bicycles from pedestrians in this area is appropriate.

The lakefront should be preserved and enhanced as a unique natural feature contrasting with the built environment. It should receive the highest level of maintenance, plantings and pedestrian-way development.

✕

There will no doubt continue to be many proposals for civic buildings and institutions on the lake shore in years to come. In general, we believe Austinites should be very careful in evaluating these proposals. The lakefront should be preserved and enhanced as a unique feature with a natural attractiveness that contrasts with urban landscapes.

Plans for a Municipal Office Complex and Plaza at the City-owned site at Second and First Streets should be revived and implemented. Additional land should be acquired now to accommodate the needs of this complex.

✕

To insure a safe and pleasant Waller Creek corridor, physical improvements should include better lighting, some pruning, regrading, and tree removal to insure good visibility, and more intensive police patrols and enforcement of vagrancy laws.

✕

Current proposals for adaptive reuse of the City power plant building should be encouraged. In addition to providing an opportunity for a new civic facility, this proposal would enhance the long term vitality of the lakefront. These proposals would allow expansion of the lakefront park property, and would expand opportunities to redevelop Shoal Creek and other City properties.

The Seaholm Power Plant has been designated for cultural/civic uses when the present use has ceased. Planning for this facility within the framework of an Arts District should be undertaken. Additional land acquisitions should be made now to accommodate parking for the area. Palmer Auditorium should also be part of this long-range arts planning for reuse as a performing arts and music facility for Austin.

✕

SESSION II : NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Although the R/UDAT team did not look at the south shore opposite downtown in detail, we believe the City should continue to focus on shoreline acquisition and access development in these areas and ultimately complete the Town Lake Comprehensive Plan. The inclusion of a substantial lakefront loop walking, running, and cycle path will be helpful in attracting visitors to Downtown Austin, as well as serving local residents and workers. We were impressed with the scope of the entire park system and the civic support it receives.

The existing recommendations found in the Austin Convention Center District Design Guidelines (1990), Austinplan (1989), the Town Lake Comprehensive Plan (1987), C.I.P. priorities for Town Lake Park by the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board and by the Parks and Recreation Board (1989) and the Lower Waller Creek Development Plan (1976) are generally consistent with R/UDAT recommendations concerning the natural environment and, therefore, should be implemented subject to available funding.

*

While significant improvements have occurred on Waller Creek over the past decade, the new Convention Center will increase public exposure to this important pedestrian corridor. The Convention Center construction itself necessitates development of pathways and terraces along the creek. These will be developed as part of the Convention Center, and should be of a quality consistent with previous creek development. Park development is proposed to the north on both sides of the creek in the District Design Guidelines for the Convention Center. These spaces should be developed to some minimum level prior to opening of the Center in the summer of 1992. Near term improvements to the park, creeks, and trail need not be expensive or sophisticated, but must provide a clean and presentable appearance that enhances the Convention Center's setting.

Implement basic landscape improvements to the Trask House area. Eliminate the City of Austin Street and Bridge Yard and make temporary improvements to the adjacent hike and bike trail. Make repairs to restore the Shoal Creek and Waller Creek trails to create continuous linkages through Downtown.

x

Longer term permanent improvements to the stream corridor should be done in conjunction with adjacent development. Building permit review requirements for projects developed along Waller Creek should include design review for creekside improvements by the Parks and Recreation Department. Ultimately a clearly defined public access right-of-way should be established along both sides of the creek.

Improvements to Waller Creek should be expedited. Additional improvements to the length of the creek, including access to both banks, should be in conjunction with private development. Design review should be done by the Parks and Recreation Department along with building permit reviews.

x

A CALL TO FINISH

1997

R/UDAT REVISITED

SESSION II : NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Like Waller Creek, Shoal Creek has received some development in the past, and now provides a "hike and bike" trail connection from the Town Lake to the University area. Less development of the creek bed itself has occurred in the past, and channel modifications, bank improvements and trail improvements are needed. These need not be substantial and/or expensive in the near term. Longer range permanent improvements should be done in conjunction with redevelopment of adjacent properties. Redevelopment of the City power plant site would allow significant stream bank modifications that would improve the creek.

Water quality and flood control, are issues that have been studied and discussed in the past. Appropriate answers to most questions are known, but implementation is elusive. While pumping of supplemental water from Town Lake to the headwaters of both creeks would be desirable from both a visual and environmental standpoint, first cost and operating costs appear to be high and not a funding priority in the near future. Small weirs and dams have been used with some success on Waller Creek and could be used more extensively on both creeks if properly engineered. Frequent stream bed cleanup, hardening of erosion areas, regrading of banks, and lining of channels with appropriately sized stone are also appropriate strategies. Proper engineering of stream sections and weirs is of course necessary, and some flood control can be achieved in doing so. Storm water retention and filtration requirements currently being considered may need to have special provisions that recognize the problems of high density urban development in downtown projects. For many of these projects, impact fees may be more appropriate than on-site mitigation. It is possible that future channel improvement could include facilities for removing floating debris, and some form of bio-filtration to remove chemical contaminants may be possible where creeks enter the lake.

Use small weirs and dams in Shoal Creek along with frequent cleanups, hardening of erosion areas, regrading of banks and lining of channels. Flooding controls, storm water retention and filtration requirements must have special provisions that recognize high-density Downtown development.



SESSION III : MARKETS AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Indeed, one of the first tasks of a new downtown organization should be to sponsor a comprehensive market analysis for downtown including interviews and focus groups with students and downtown employees. The information gathered through this analysis should be used in promotional materials and in targeted efforts to attract promising businesses in other parts of the metropolitan area and to encourage the formation of new businesses.

Through the auspices of the DMO, sponsor a comprehensive market analysis for Downtown and use its finding to attract new business in and for Downtown.

+

A second important effort should target minority business entrepreneurs and help them take advantage of business opportunities in the downtown. Existing and new small business aids, such as revolving loan programs, should be packaged to accomplish this objective

Develop measures and a timetable to ensure minority participation in the local economy.

*

Despite a relatively soft retail market, there still may be areas of opportunity for downtown. The most immediate goal should be to fill available space on Congress Avenue and East Sixth Street with uses that seek to serve the existing downtown market (workforce, students, visitor, close-in residents). The success of such an effort will depend in large part on the ability to increase available foot traffic on these key streets with better shuttle/transit connections and streetscape improvements.

Facilitate the lease or purchase of a minimum of 500 net usable square feet by each of 20 street-level retail shops or restaurants.
Ten of the new establishments shall be located in the area bounded by 11th Street, First Street, Colorado Street and Brazos Street.
Five of the establishments shall be enterprises owned by minorities and women.
Coordinate the publication of a Business Resources Directory outlining existing resources available to businesses and retail and property owners.

✓

It may well be that a significant new retail base in the area near East Sixth Street and Congress Avenue can never be developed without some form of public financial participation in the project. Few major retail projects have been undertaken in American downtowns in recent years without public participation. Austin must be prepared to consider this possibility. The decision should be guided by the extent of financial participation required versus the extent of the financial benefits returned to the city.

Retail revitalization efforts should take place in a public-private partnership. Public participation, at a minimum, involves staff liaison for research on sales and property tax issues. Focus should be directed to research on the tourism pool rebate to the City of Austin from the State of Texas. Additional study is also required into other state efforts to capture tourism dollars and how these efforts can benefit Austin. Authorize incentive and rebate programs to attract and retain businesses in the targeted area.

x

A CALL TO FINISH

1997

R/UDAT REVISITED

SESSION III : MARKETS AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

In the long run, downtown needs more than convenience retailing serving the local market if it is to compete successfully in the regional market. In order to serve visitors and convention delegates, and to draw shoppers from the entire regional market, downtown will need to provide a concentration of specialty retail tenants that is unique in the market. The ideal location for such retail is in the area generally north and west of the Convention Center. The closer it can be located to the southeast side of the intersection of Congress Avenue and East Sixth Street, the more effective it will be in serving the entire downtown market during the day and night. This location will also help to reinforce the activity that currently exists on the two most important streets in downtown.

Economically enhance the Downtown area by increasing shopping and eating destinations for Austin's citizens and visitors.

+

The city must also come to grips with the reality that additional retail space added on the periphery of downtown and beyond can further reduce opportunities for downtown retail. With respect to retail tenants who can serve the needs of visitors and draw from a large part of the regional market, the City and the downtown community should make every effort to attract these tenants to downtown locations.

Focus new retail development projects to central Downtown locations and not to the periphery of Downtown.

x

Other steps to protect and enhance downtown retail would go beyond a targeted recruitment effort to enlist the active cooperation of property owners in holding out for tenants that complement the desired retail mix. Downtown organizations in a number of other cities have successfully used financial incentives to encourage such selectivity on the part of owners. They have also encouraged owners and downtown retailers to promote more commonality in hours and other retailing practices.

x

SESSION III : MARKETS AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

It is probably too early given current conditions in Austin's downtown retailing to seek adoption of these forms of owner and retailer cooperation. Nevertheless, Sixth Street, with its concentration of businesses, offers a potential site for eventual testing and adoption of these promising management techniques in Austin.

✕

There are several tools and resources that must be used to enable the minority community to build capacity. These include: technical assistance programs linked to UT business school, and its real estate development courses, land value write downs utilizing publicly owned property, grant funds for market and feasibility evaluations, and greater involvement and the development of community based non profit housing and economic developers. The minority communities must work together if they are to secure public support for a city wide neighborhood, economic development program.

*

Furthermore, we have recommended the development of housing in the downtown core and within designated neighborhood development sites, as we believe this will enhance the city's diversity, develop a market for goods and services, and help ensure the success of an active downtown.

A successful Downtown with 24-hour use must have residential availability. Residential scale and mix of uses must be established by regulation and/or incentives to encourage housing within the area. Establish hard edges and definitive design to protect existing Downtown neighborhoods.

✓

A CALL TO FINISH

1997

R/UDAT REVISITED

SESSION III : MARKETS AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Develop measures and a timetable to ensure minority participation in the local economy. *

Begin linking Downtown and East Austin along the East 11th, East Sixth, East Fifth, and East 12th street commercial corridors.

Develop a neighborhood scaled project on East 11th Street and fund it.

Link the development of vacant parcels north and south of East 11th Street and directly east of IH-35 to downtown, primarily via the East 12th Street median and landscaping, to create a significant draw to the East 11th Street area.

It is imperative that the East Austin community participate in the planning of any project and that the development capability be created in East Austin to enable the community to take advantage of linkages.

Consider linking downtown to East Austin under IH-35's East Fourth Street underpass, using the open space under IH-35.

Support development of the Capital Metro site on East Fourth Street, east of IH-35, that benefits and has the support of the community in East Austin.

SESSION IV : TRANSPORTATION

R/UDAT

A CALL TO ACTION

STATUS

Planning for transportation as a component of the development of an active and vibrant downtown must begin with the premise that "streets are for people." The focus must shift from how to get people efficiently across town, to how can we encourage people to stop, shop, and spend time downtown.

Develop a Downtown transportation plan that emphasizes Downtown as a destination point rather than a transportation passageway and reduces the intrusion of cars in favor of the creation of a pedestrian environment. ✓

I-35 improvements should be limited to possible upgrading of the existing structure without major land acquisitions. The State should abandon the plan for double decking the expressway. Any expansion which would further add to the barrier which now separates East Austin from the rest of downtown, goes contrary to linking neighborhoods to the heart of the City.

The Texas Department of Transportation is planning, as part of an IH-35 capacity improvement project, to provide much better access and egress from the CBD by providing a collector/distributor roadway and new ramps to the CBD that should perform better than the present configuration. Ramps that connect directly to City streets are one of the most important features of the design concept. This type of ramp requires a one-way street at its terminus to function properly. Connection to a two-way configuration would reduce capacity to an unacceptable level. The position of the Texas Department of Transportation is that Downtown cannot afford to lose capacity on the CBD streets. ➡

The Texas Department of Transportation is studying the possibility of replacing some of the existing high embankment that carries the main lanes of IH-35 with bridges or a depressed roadway to reduce the visual barrier between the CBD and the area east of IH-35. It is also considering the possibility of extending Third and Fifth streets across IH-35. This extension would allow all streets from Third to Eighth to connect from the CBD to the areas east of the CBD.

Streets in downtown should be designed to slow down traffic and to integrate vehicle traffic better with pedestrian traffic. A network of streets should be changed to accommodate two way traffic. 6th Street should be immediately converted to two way traffic.

The Transportation Subcommittee did a study of the CBD street systems. The following topics were addressed: traffic safety, pedestrian safety, parking conditions, capacity, signal timing, effects on the environment, transit operation, business and physical modifications, and Historic Steam Train Service. Two-way conversions require significant investment of public or private funds. Further study is required prior to the conversion of all one-way streets to two-way flow. ✕

A CALL TO FINISH

1997

R/UDAT REVISITED

SESSION IV : TRANSPORTATION

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
Any East/West connector should be accommodated by improved local streets. Adequate East/West routes appear to exist by the use of First street and Route 290 Ben White Blvd. and the downtown street grid.	Improved access to and from Downtown is required. A highway across Downtown connecting IH-35 to Loop 1 is not compatible with the vision of R/UDAT. Modification to the IH-35 highway ramps will improve the safety and flow on the east. Traffic flow to and from the west to Downtown is a major problem. Improvements on West First, West Fifth and West Sixth streets or other west end streets are inconsistent with the existing quality of living and activities. The Third Street Gateway/Parkway proposal, consisting of space for moving automobiles and transit vehicles, provides an alternative for accessibility needed for Downtown demands, including the Convention Center.	+
Develop a parking management plan by the end of 1991 that can be implemented in time for the opening of the convention center.	A parking management plan is required to ensure that a comprehensive program is in place to meet the needs of the Convention Center, businesses, commercial establishments, office complexes and other purposes provided by the Central Business District. The plan should integrate Capital Metro's fixed routes and extensions, bus service, 'Dillo service, future light rail transit service and off-street parking locations (within the core area as well as peripheral areas).	+
Dillo—The Dillo system needs to be run using fixed routes, and should be expanded to include a "Historic Loop" which circulates around downtown making connections to the Convention Center, The Hotels, the State Capitol complex, The University, and Congress Ave. across Town Lake over the Congress Street bridge to the Palmer Auditorium site.	Currently the 'Dillo operates on two routes which connect the Auditorium Shores area with Downtown, Capitol complex, and the southern area of the University campus. A proposal is now under consideration to add a third 'Dillo route in the summer of 1992 which would connect the Auditorium Shores parking areas with the Convention Center and many of the major Downtown hotels and tourist attractions. This route, if approved, would start operation to coincide with the opening of the Convention Center.	+
Buses—An extensive bus system serves downtown very well with frequent service and short headways.		✓
Capital Metro should implement the "Downtown Historic Loop" by use of the Dillo as a plan that can be put in service by 1992 consistent with the opening of the Convention Center. A Further upgrade of this system by using a Trolley can be developed as time will allow.	Historic trolley service could operate as a Downtown circulator and provide the linkage of the Downtown/Convention Center to the Capitol, the University of Texas and to the retail areas east and west of Congress Avenue.	*

SESSION IV : TRANSPORTATION

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
Light Rail Vehicles—Alignment of the Light rail vehicle can be a catalyst for the development of downtown and the surrounding smaller neighborhood retail centers. The systems alignment must also tie into a larger plan for the servicing the City as a whole. Care must be taken to avoid an alignment that ignores the importance of Congress Ave., the State Capitol, the Commercial district, the Convention Center, and the University.	Capital Metro is currently analyzing the feasibility of an electrically powered light rail transit system in the north central area of the city. Two alternative alignments in the Downtown area are being examined. If deemed feasible, a light rail could be in operation as early as 1996.	✕
The planning for the Light Rail must be tied to a master plan alignment which allows for future expansion of the system to areas and neighborhoods beyond. Capital Metro must work toward establishing and fixing the alignments of the East/West, and the North/South routes, with full public input, concurrent with its efforts to implement its phase one.		✕
The planning for Light Rail must be developed with a broader attitude toward parking that speaks to downtown needs, University of Texas needs, and commuter parking needs. Capital Metro must step up its efforts to encourage the use of public transit and develop a plan for collector parking on the outskirts of the Downtown at the terminus of the line. Marketing must be improved and aggressively pursued that compliments this approach to parking.		✕
East Austin Link—The connection of downtown to the East Austin neighborhood can be reinforced by the proposed alignment of the Light Rail system. The East Austin Link must be located along the railroad right of way with the intention of providing full service to the East Austin community with frequent stops and adequate headways.		*
Capital Metro should move expeditiously to have its first phase light rail vehicle system operational by the year 1995.		✕
Capital Metro must look at the economic development potential of the East Austin Link. A development partnership which provides an equity position for the community in this area will help to revitalize a major section of the City.		✕

SESSION V : COMMUNITY ISSUES: ARTS/HUMAN SERVICES

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
Develop a bond issue program for the following cultural facilities whose locations will be determined later: Mexican American Museum; Carver Cultural Center; Discovery Hall/Science Museum; and Children's Museum	Develop a bond issue, or means of facilitating a bond issue, for renovation/construction of following facilities: Palmer Auditorium (adaptive reuse) City Coliseum (adaptive reuse) Mexican American Cultural Center Carver Cultural Arts Center Paramount and State theaters* Discovery Hall Seaholm Power Plant and adjacent land** Cultural Arts Facilities Study City-owned warehouse space (adaptive reuse)	+
Reserve the electric powerhouse for a world class museum.	**	✗
Insure that the State Theatre and the Paramount Theatre remain and are economically sustained.	*	✓
Provide a matching grant up to \$25,000 to get the Norwood Estate mansions moved and started.		☞
	We recommend creation of a Downtown Cultural Arts District, within the spirit of the R/UDAT report and of the preceding statement, to serve the artists and the local, regional, national and international markets.	✗
	We recommend development of a comprehensive architectural design, an engineering and funding plan for the retrofitting of existing structures and construction of new facilities. These plans will incorporate and respect the natural landscape and environment of Town Lake as a priority. As a long-term recommendation, we propose phased development of cultural facilities, funding options, operations and projects through maximum utilization of public and private resources. Additionally, we propose development of a central cultural facility in the Downtown area to function as an economic-tourist draw, representing Austin's cultural heritage and varied artistic resources.	*

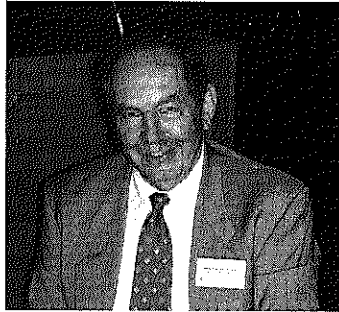
SESSION V : COMMUNITY ISSUES: ARTS/HUMAN SERVICES

R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
Develop a meaningful program on the homeless combining private services, public service, the churches and an organization responsible to get this issue under control. Fund and build a detoxification center with comprehensive treatment.	R/UDAT supports the findings of the Detoxification Task Force. Recommendations are the use of excess capacity in existing treatment facilities at an annual cost of \$620,000 for 10-detox and 25-treatment beds. In the longer term, the City should establish a detoxification and treatment facility which would include a booking station, 70-bed detox unit and 50-bed treatment unit. Estimated annual cost of operation of such a facility on a lease basis is \$3,303,749.	✗
It is recommended that the three jurisdictions (state, county, city) work with proposals together to provide a comprehensive mental health and alcohol/drug rehabilitation center with a related transitional housing program. In addition, it may be advantageous to relocate the HOBO operation in closer proximity to the Salvation Army to reduce a portion of the conflict with Sixth Street as well as to coordinate programs.	Consolidate services for the homeless in the vicinity of the Salvation Army. Caritas has received financial aid from the City to rent facilities for food distribution and other services and will operate at times the Salvation Army is closed.	✗
Provide twenty-four hour patrols along Sixth Street and its immediate vicinity with consideration of all users of the street: residents, retail shops, restaurants, entertainment and visitors. Examine new barricade areas after East Sixth Street improvements are in place.	Create a structured day labor program in conjunction with the Salvation Army.	✓
Form a special police district for the downtown "neighborhood" and recognize its unique characteristics and its importance in the economic vitality of the entire city.	Increase police protection and continue enforcement of the curfew and alcohol consumption ordinances. After capital improvements are in place on East Sixth Street, the City should reconsider the use of barricades to control traffic and crowds.	✓
	It is suggested that there should be a special police district for the Downtown area. This necessity will increase with the opening of the Convention Center. Special identifying uniforms as an aid to visitors might be considered.	+
	The need for day care facilities in or near Downtown is recognized.	+

SESSION VI : REGULATIONS AND GOVERNMENT POLICIES

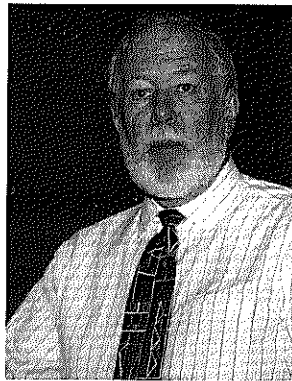
R/UDAT	A CALL TO ACTION	STATUS
The City of Austin should complete a comprehensive land use and urban design plan for the downtown as quickly as possible to assure a common policy and plan. This sector plan should be coordinated with the State and the University with particular emphasis on issues which complement the vision presented for the downtown	Complete the Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines for the entire Downtown, including coordination with the State of Texas and the University of Texas.	✗
Old West Austin: The objective in this area is to preserve the residential scale and quality as well as allow a mix of uses including residential. The Limited Office (LO), General Office (GO) and General Commercial (CS) Districts do not allow residential uses. This should be modified.		✓
Overlay Districts: The overlay districts previously identified apply to the Central Business District and the Downtown Mixed Use District. These require a review process; however, they are reviewed against general performance criteria. It is recommended that specific urban design guidelines be prepared for each of those Overlay Districts.	Development proposals should be reviewed against not only general performance criteria but urban design guidelines prepared for each downtown overlay district. Excellence of design and preservation of the unique character of Austin should be encouraged.	✗
Capitol Dominance-Detail treatment of State owned property on 11th Street at Congress Avenue.		*
Congress Avenue-Maintain continuity of street facades at the property line with canopies covering the sidewalk. Require retail uses on a majority of the street frontage in each block.		✗
Sixth/Pecan Street -Incorporate design recommendations of the Sixth Street Study.		✗
Downtown Parks-Include all downtown squares. Include the entire half block adjacent to each square into the district.		✗
Downtown Creeks-Evaluate if 60 feet from the centerline is adequate, increase it necessary.		✗
An overall urban design plan and guidelines should be prepared integrating many of those currently adopted or under review. Recommended changes to the current districts should be held up until these guidelines are prepared and adopted.	Promote the revitalization of Downtown by creating special districts which emphasize clustered uses and thematic urban design. Districts may be defined by use, architectural character and age.	✗

R/UDAT REVISITED - TEAM MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES



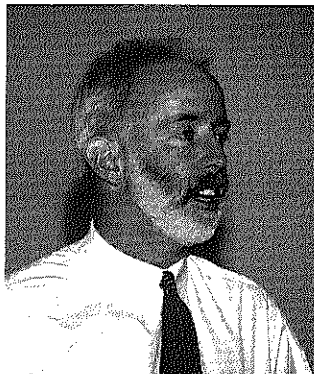
Charles M. Davis, FAIA

Charles Davis is a Senior Design Principal with San Francisco architecture firm Esherick Homsey Dodge and Davis. He is widely recognized both nationally and internationally as a leading designer of aquariums and exhibit facilities. Furthermore, Mr. Davis has extensive experience in major academic and institutional design including major projects at the University of California, Irvine, University of Southern California, Baytree, and Stanford University. Mr. Davis' has taught architecture at the University of California, Berkeley and Los Angeles. He has also participated in or led numerous AIA sponsored Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team studies throughout the nation.



Robert Burke, AICP

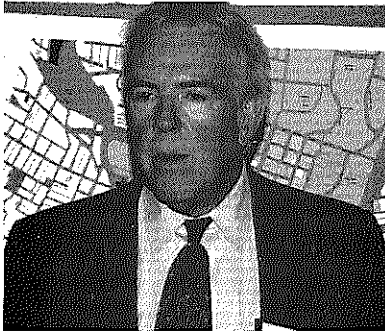
Robert Burke has both public and private planning and design experience. He was in charge of Advance Planning for Richmond, Virginia and Deputy Director of the City of St. Louis Plan Commission. Prior to beginning his firm in 1984, he was a Principal and Director of Planning for Management and Planning Services/The NBBJ Group, based in Seattle. He has been active in national and state planning organizations including the American Planning Association, American Institute of Certified Planners, and Planning Association of Washington. Mr. Burke is a partner and co-founder of McConnell/Burke. His planning experience and professional involvement are expanded by periodic teaching in the urban planning program at the University of Washington.



Thomas A. Gougeon

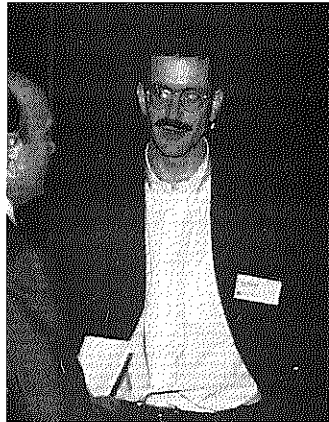
Thomas Gougeon is currently the Executive Director of the W.M.B. Berger Foundation, a supporting organization of the Denver Foundation. The mission of the W.M.B. Berger Foundation is to "connect kids with nature" and the organization plans to award about \$1 million per year in grants to other nonprofits that further the mission of the Foundation. From 1983 to 1991, he was special assistant to Denver Mayor Federico Peña, in charge of dozens of projects, the largest of which was the Denver International Airport. In 1991, Gougeon became Chief Executive Officer of the Stapleton Redevelopment Foundation and in 1996, worked as a consultant to Colorado's Ocean Journey.

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James A. Murray, Ph.D.

Jim Murray is the President of Murray Lamont & Associates, Inc. in Denver, Colorado. His firm provides services to corporate and government clients in the areas of strategic and comprehensive planning, environmental economics, public finance, growth management, economic development, and negotiation and implementation of public-private ventures. Previous work experience includes positions as Finance Director for the City and County of Denver, Colorado and the General Electric Company. Mr. Murray earned in Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Oregon and has also earned degrees at Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and the University of New Mexico.



Paul David Sehnert

Paul Sehnert of Ernst & Young Real Estate Consulting Group's Hartford office serves corporations and financial institutions with real estate asset repositioning and development feasibility studies. His work for financial institutions, on workouts and asset repositioning strategies, includes a disposition/feasibility plan for Manufacturers Hanover and a retail strategy for the Rockefeller Center ownership in New York. Mr. Sehnert has also been involved in the creation of business district redevelopment plans, neighborhood urban design plans, and zoning and development guidelines. Mr. Sehnert received a Master of Science in Real Estate Development from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and graduated Magna Cum Laude from the College of Design, Architecture and Art at the University of Cincinnati.

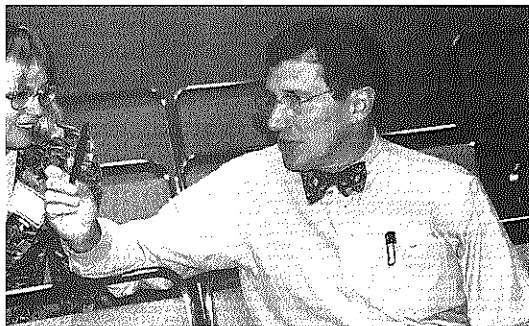
R/UDAT REVISITED - TEAM MEMBER BIOGRAPHIES



Elizabeth "Holly" Stabler

Holly Stabler moved to Bristol, Rhode Island in 1995 where she writes and gardens and enjoys the urban amenities of nearby Providence and Boston. Previously, she was associate director of a settlement house on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. and an independent consultant specializing in retail management and organization development in downtowns and other commercial centers. She served as Vice President and Director of Research and Policy development for the International Downtown Association and is a co-author of the IDA-Urban Land Institute case study book on centralized retail management. Her experience also includes eight years as a professional staff member of the Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs of the U.S. House of Representatives, and consulting assignments with the World Bank, and others. She earned a B.A. from Barnard College and graduate degrees in political science from Columbia University.

Richard Ramsey, ASLA, AICP



Richard Ramsey has over 27 years of experience managing multi-disciplinary projects involving site analysis, planning and feasibility study, public involvement, site and building design, cost estimating, preparation of contract documents and construction administration. Mr. Ramsey has prepared master plans and design documents for parks, commercial, industrial and institutional facilities, shoreline developments, youth camps, wildlife preserves, and roadway corridors. His academic training and professional experience covers a range of site planning and design including park planning, urban design, landscape architecture, forestry, site engineering, and architecture. His background in development and urban design has included preparation of design guidelines and administration of design review proceedings for both public and private clients.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Report Credits - This report was written and edited by Lucy Buck of the Downtown Austin Alliance with the notes and comments from the steering committee. Layout and design work was done by Shelly Branch.

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