

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street – Urban Entertainment & Retail District



October 19, 2006

### 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

#### Project Understanding

- 6<sup>th</sup> Street is a major commercial artery in downtown Austin
- West 6<sup>th</sup> Street is emerging with destination retailers at 6<sup>th</sup> and Lamar, but with an abundance of bars between Henderson and Congress
  - **Careful** planning should reinforce the positive growth and balance skewed growth
- The entertainment district on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street is a significant part of Austin's history and present identity
  - The proliferation of **just bars** is threatening real estate values and 6<sup>th</sup> Street's reputation
- East and West 6<sup>th</sup> Street have split personalities requiring different strategies
  - West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, between Henderson and Congress is similar to East 6<sup>th</sup> Street

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Downtown Merchandise Mix

- **Downtown**
  - 123 Bars
  - 130 Full/Limited Restaurants
  - 68 Retailers
- **Warehouse District**
  - 26 Bars
  - 21 Full/Limited Restaurants
  - 0 Retailers
- **East 6<sup>th</sup> Street**
  - 57 Bars
  - 23 Full/Limited Restaurants
  - 14 Retailers
- **West 6<sup>th</sup> Street**
  - 8 Bars
  - 15 Full/Limited Restaurants
  - 11 Retailers (8 at Lamar & 6<sup>th</sup>)

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### West 6<sup>th</sup> Street - Merchandise Mix

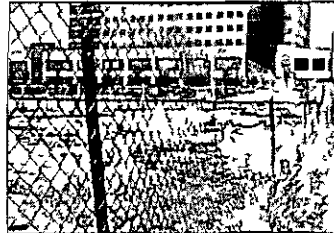
- Existing uses are balanced on 6<sup>th</sup> and Lamar
- Uses are unbalanced between Henderson and Congress
- Build upon existing local, regional, and national retail merchandise mix
- Retail to grow east from Lamar and West from Congress
- Without thoughtful planning, uses will continue to be skewed



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street: Urban Entertainment Strategy

### West 6<sup>th</sup> Street - Opportunities

- Opportunity for mixed-use infill development
- Need for contiguous retail frontage
- Infill needs to employ good mixed-use development design standards
- Create policies and standards
  - Distinct, well-designed storefronts
  - Retail entrances on primary retail streets (i.e. Congress & 6th)
  - Residential and hotel entrances on secondary streets
- Reconfigure existing buildings' first floors to accommodate interesting retail



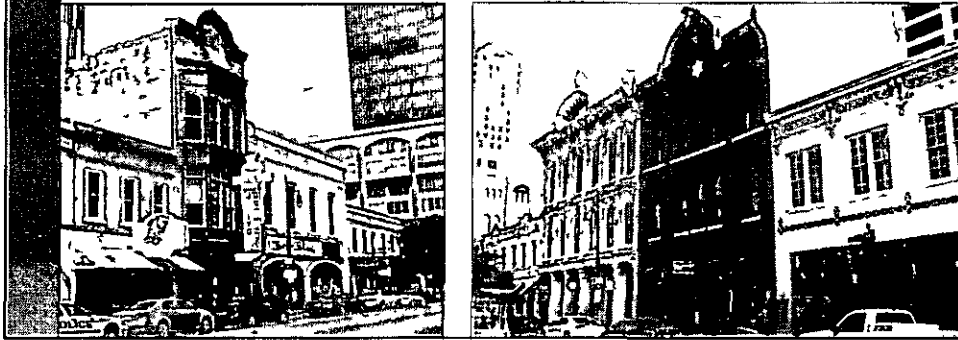
## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Urban Entertainment Districts (UEDs)

Downtown districts anchored by a mixture of entertainment and cultural attractions, live music and performance venues, movie theaters, restaurants, nightclubs/bars, and many **retail** uses

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

# Current Conditions on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Austin's UED



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Stakeholder Comments

- Top “concerns”
  - Transients on street / proximity of social services
  - Proliferation of bars with cheap drinks and shots
  - Perception of “police-state” on weekends
  - Parking
  - Owners fined for cleaning / improving storefront sidewalks
- “Hoteliers discourage visitors from going to E 6<sup>th</sup> St, they recommend the Warehouse District instead”
- “Over half of the visitor comments report disappointment in E 6<sup>th</sup> St”
- “Austin risks losing female-oriented conventions”

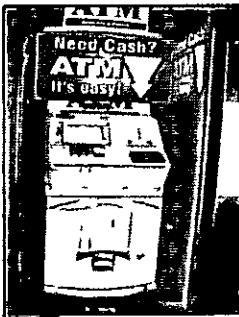
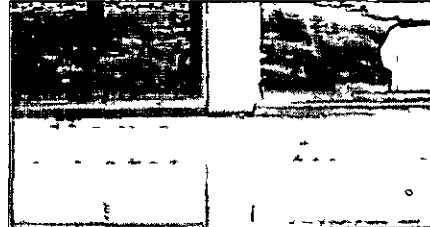
## 6th Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Physical Conditions - Buildings

- No reinvestment, broken windows, dirt and filth, deterioration



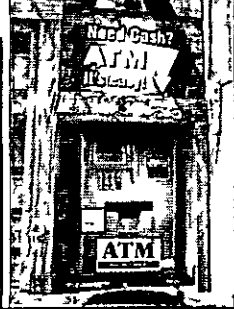
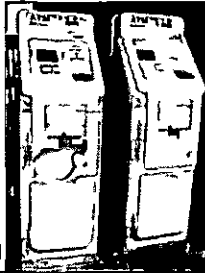
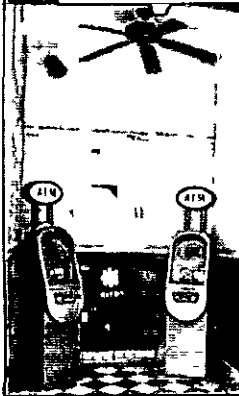
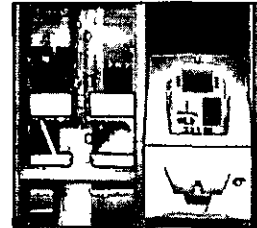
Still there 2 months later



### Street Urban Entertainment 19 ATMs on East 6th Street

Lowest Fee

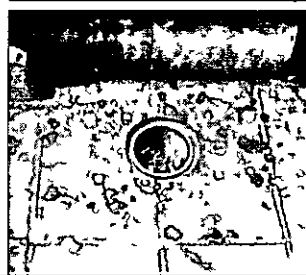
CHEAPEST ATM ON 6TH



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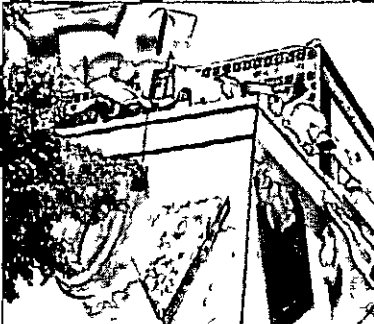
### Streetscape

- Trash, gum, bird droppings, basic sanitation



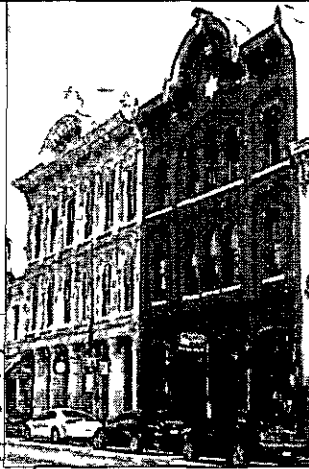
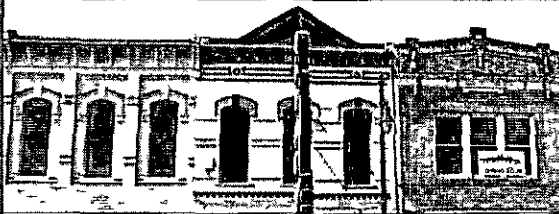
## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Physical Conditions - Great Graphics



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Physical Conditions Historic Fabric



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### 24 Hours on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street

- Noon
- 6:00 PM
- Midnight – 2:00 AM
- 6:00 AM

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

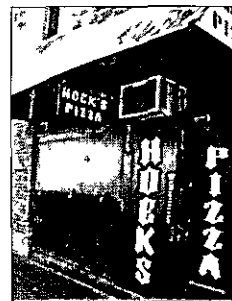
### 24 Hours on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street

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## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Merchandise Mix

- 55 Bars, clubs, music venues
- 2 Comedy Clubs
- 16 Restaurants
- 7 Quick Service Food (only one open during the day)
- 14 Retailers
- 8 Services
- 6 Offices
- 6 Vacancies





## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Live Music Venues

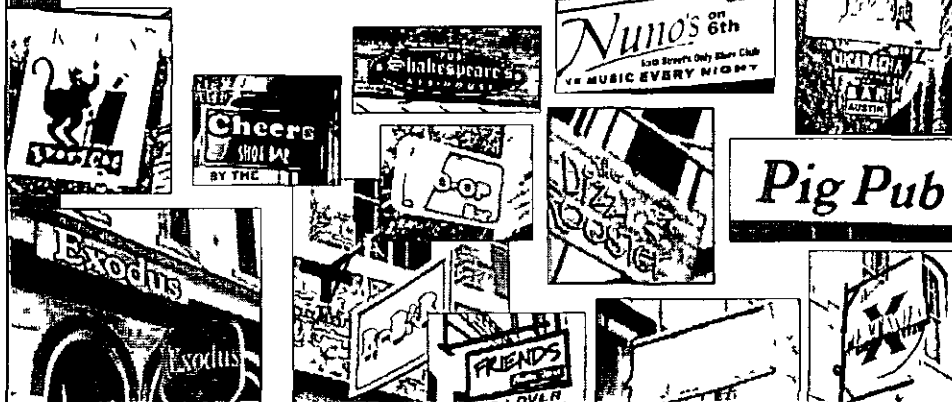
- 57 bar/club and comedy venues
- 14 venues with live acts (2 are comedy)
  - 2 venues have 1 show / week
  - 5 venues have 2 - 3 shows / week
  - 5 venues have 4 - 6 shows / week
  - 2 venues have 7 shows / week



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Merchandise Mix

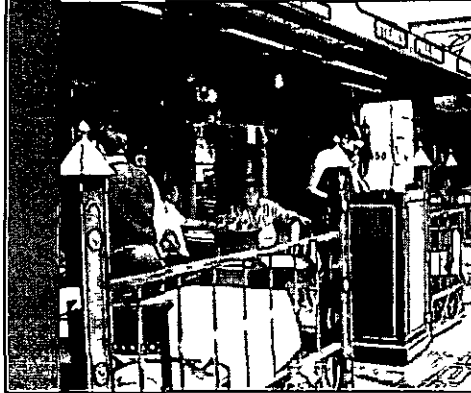
- Bars and clubs with cheap beer and shots dominate over other entertainment uses
- Need diversity of uses daytime and nighttime as well as alternative entertainment uses



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Successful UEDs

- Busy during day and night
- Balanced merchandise mix
- Many more restaurants than bars



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Successful UEDs

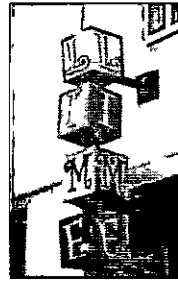
- Routinely cleaned sidewalks
  - Weekly power-washing, continuous litter removal
- Well-maintained buildings and businesses
  - Owners and tenants who care about their public face
  - All operations cleaned before start of business day regardless of use



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Successful UEDs

- Well-designed storefronts
- Interesting displays through the day and proper lighting at night



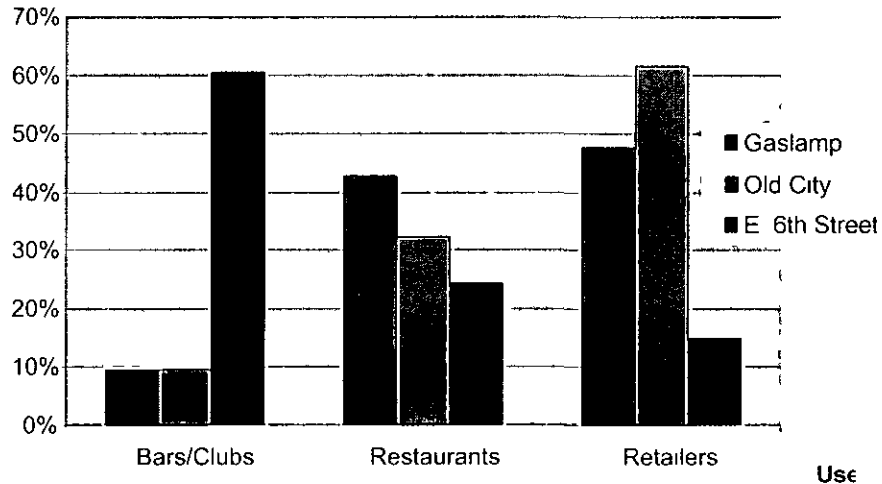
## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Successful UEDs

- **Subtle** but effective police presence (varied for activity level)
- Streets open to pedestrians and **cars**
- Sufficient parking within **close** proximity
- **Influential** task force serving as district advocate
  - City and state elected officials, alcohol board, property owners, business owners, police, city staff, PID, resident
- Zoning overlay districts **balancing** uses
- **Active** PID's that are involved with
  - Buildings and business owners
  - Closely monitoring liquor licenses

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Comparison of Uses Gaslamp, Old City, & E 6<sup>th</sup> Street



Percentage refers to percentage of three categories shown

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Recent Downtown Trends - 2 years (2004 - 06)

- Generated from building permit data between I-35 (east) and Lamar (west) and 11th Street (north) to the river (south)
- 66 new business
- **Net new businesses**
  - 16 “cocktail lounges”
  - 23 restaurants
  - 13 retailers (but for 2nd Street, there would only be 4)
- **Bars are “over-served” and restaurants are at a saturation point**

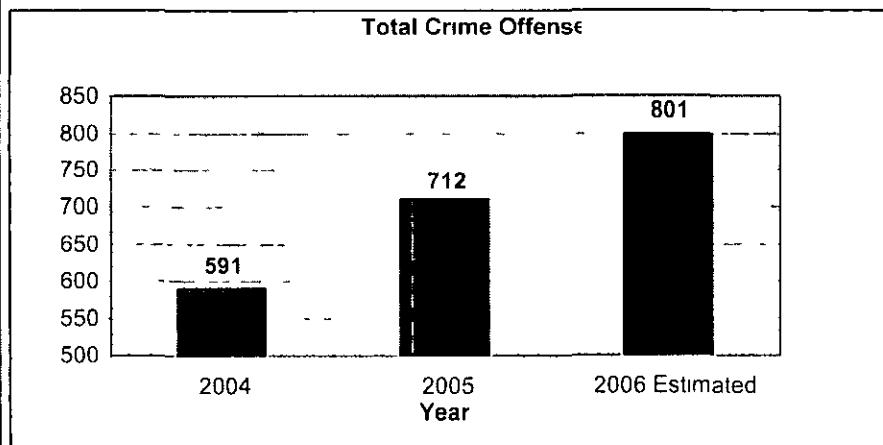
## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Police Statistics

- Downtown Area Command (DTAC) divided into 4 districts (E 6<sup>th</sup> is in District 3)
- DTAC has 80 officers in downtown
- **32** officers (40%) spend majority or all of time in E 6<sup>th</sup> area - % increases during peak times
- **2** officers in the Warehouse District during peak hours
- Annual estimated cost to provide police services to E 6<sup>th</sup> Street
  - \$4 2 million (conservative estimate)

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Crime Trends – Downtown Area Command E 6<sup>th</sup> Street



## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

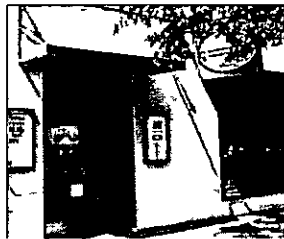
### Crime Trends – Downtown Area Command E 6th Street

- Although city's crime rate is down, East 6th Street's has increased
- Bulk of the arrests occur at 2 00 AM on Fri, Sat, and Sunday morning

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Existing Sales – East 6<sup>th</sup> Street

- Lowest rental rates of all retail districts in downtown
- Low rental rates indicate low sales
- Annual sales reported of \$150 - \$350 per sq ft
- Licensed street vendors make up to \$250,000, pay \$400 annually for license



## What should East 6<sup>th</sup> Street be?

A proactively-managed Live Music, Entertainment and Mixed-Use Historic District that lives up to its brand and is a source of pride for Austinites

- **Balance** the uses
- Recruit **creative** entertainment and **eclectic** retail uses
  - Film and radio related uses (screening room)
  - Local entrepreneurial businesses
  - Music and recording related uses
- Maintain “**unique**” and “**funky**” appeal
- Retain bar and live music venues that **complement** identity
- Foster **uniquely** Austin businesses
- Cater to **underserved** markets
  - Conventioneers, office workers, downtown visitors (sports stadium), residents

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Merchandise Mix Input – Brainstorming Group

#### Creative entrepreneurs

- Matt Hovis, **Action Figure**
- Abigail King, **Club DeVille**
- Liz Lambert, **Hotel San Jose, Joe's Coffee Shop**
- Stephen Moser, **Austin Chronicle, local fashion designer**
- Teresa Ferguson, **Music Commission**
- Michael Knox, **City of Austin**
- Kevin Walker, **Antique Dealer**
- Sylvia Carson, **KUT Radio**
- Scott Brown, **Music, Film & Digital Media Concept**
- Bob Hudgins, **Texas Film Commission**
- Rose Reyes, **ACVB Film & Music Office**
- Bill Shea, **Maggie Maes**
- Marcellina Kampa, **Soft Service**
- Barbara Holden, **Music, Film & Digital Media Concept**
- Tim League, **Alamo Drafthouse**
- Anthony Carmargo, **Anthony Nak**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Merchandise Mix Plan

#### • Sampling of uniquely Austin uses to recruit

- Coffee shop
- Music/ Bookstore / news-stand
- Austin Roller Girls
- Art galleries
- Multi-use operations
- Independent movie houses
- Restaurants with great brunches
- Live music venues
- Boutique designer studios, vintage clothing





## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Conclusions

- Poorly-operated and maintained establishments are **not** value-added for the city
  - By products require a major city expense (police) far beyond their financial benefit to the city
- Current state of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street brand is **disappointing** to visitors and locals
- Warehouse district captures former E 6<sup>th</sup> Street patrons – E 6<sup>th</sup> Street pattern of **decline** could repeat itself here
- **Core** issues
  - Landlords leasing to single-use (bars), poor-quality operators, and 3rd party operators
  - Poorly-maintained streets and buildings
    - Attractive to transients unattractive to customers and potential tenants
- **Negative** trends will continue, must be addressed now

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

**How does 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
achieve its full  
potential?**

**Recommendations**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### Recommendations

- City of Austin, DAA, & Building/Business Owners need to work together
- **Short-term recommendations**
  - City
    - City Managers Office create 6th Street UED Task Force
    - Intensively power-wash sidewalks and continue to maintain
    - Explore new revenues and other resources for East 6th Street improvements
      - Parking meters revenues
      - Street vendor permit fees
    - Explore and implement alternative policing methods
    - Create Mixed-Use Developer Guidelines for primary commercial streets
    - Regulate ATMs
- Model for maintenance on **2nd Street** is successful

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street Urban Entertainment Strategy

### PSOA and DAA

- **Work** with property owners
  - Convey Merchandise Mix Plan and Strategy to landlords
  - Educate property owners on steps to facilitate revitalization and renovation
- **Frequent** litter pick-up on street
- Oversee recruitment **consistent** with merchandise strategy
- Continue **relationship** with E 6th Street brainstorming group

### Building and Business Owners

- Lease to operators **consistent** to Merchandise Mix Plan
- Incorporate and follow cleanliness, operational, and maintenance **standards** in leases
  - Clean building exterior and interior by 7 00 AM regardless of operational hours
  - Replace broken/deteriorating parts of façade
- Landlord should **control** property - avoid long-term leases or sublets