

# ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2017-0112

**HLC DATE:**

November 27, 2017

December 11, 2017

**PC DATE:**

December 12, 2017

**APPLICANT:** HE Driskill, LLC

**HISTORIC NAME:** Driskill Hotel

**WATERSHED:** Waller Creek

**ADDRESS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE:** 604 Brazos Street

**ZONING FROM:** CBD to CBD-H

**SUMMARY STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the proposed zoning change from Central Business District (CBD) district to Central Business District – Historic Landmark (CBD-H) combining district zoning.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION:**

Architecture, historical associations, and community value.

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** November 27, 2017: Meeting cancelled due to lack of a quorum. To be considered on December 11, 2017.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** To be considered on December 12, 2017.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The building is listed as a Priority 1 for research in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984), and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1969. The ca. 1930 annex on 7<sup>th</sup> Street was designated a city historic landmark several years ago.

**CITY COUNCIL DATE:** December 14, 2017

**ACTION:**

**ORDINANCE READINGS:** 1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

**ORDINANCE NUMBER:**

**CASE MANAGER:** Steve Sadowsky

**PHONE:** 974-6454

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION:** Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (1969)

**Architecture:**

The Driskill Hotel was designed by Jasper N. Preston and Son of Austin in 1885 in the Romanesque Revival style. The Romanesque Revival was very popular for institutional buildings from the 1870s through the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as it expressed permanence in its heavy materials, almost always masonry. The massiveness of the construction generally limited the use of the style to public buildings, including court houses, city halls, libraries and other educational buildings, churches, synagogues, and railroad stations, although there are notable examples of large private residences also built in this style, particularly in the upper Midwest.

Romanesque Revival buildings are defined by their use of masonry as the primary materials, arches over entries and windows, recessed entries, and the use of architectural ornamentation, such as a turret, or emphasized gable. The buildings are generally asymmetrical, but sometimes that effect is achieved subtly, with the use of different arch patterns and fenestration patterns, cutaway corners, or other architectural features that reflect a departure from the rigidly symmetrical Greek Revival style that preceded it.

The Driskill Hotel reflects the defining characteristics of the Romanesque Revival style. It is a very heavy-appearing composition, with pressed brick walls trimmed with white limestone. Its principal entries are deeply recessed and trimmed in rusticated limestone in round arches. The windows are grouped singly, in pairs, or in triple sets, with a combination of round-arched and segmental-arched openings. The south (6<sup>th</sup> Street) and east (Brazos Street) elevations each contain a central, prominent gable with extensive ornamentation, including the name of the building at the base of the tympanum of the gable, and the bust of the founder and one of his sons at the apex of the gable. The busts were crafted by Italian artisans: Colonel Driskill looks out over the south façade, facing 6<sup>th</sup> Street; his son, A.W. (“Tobe”) looks over the west façade, and his other son J.W. looks over the east (Brazos Street) façade. Historic windows in the building exhibit a variety of configurations, including a multi-light round-arched transom (restored), 2:2, and plate glass in the other round-arched openings on the ground floor. The south and east elevations also feature a two-story portico, each with a pressed stone railing on the second and third stories, and supported by plain round columns, with combination of stylized capitals, including those on the corners of the portico with stylized leaf designs, another defining characteristic of the Romanesque Revival style. Between the second and third stories, there is a pressed stone spandrel panel between the triple set of rectangular windows below and the segmental-arched triple windows above. Above the porticos on the south and east elevations is a colonnaded opening flush with the wall of the building, and above that, on the fourth floor, is a triple round arch, with the side arches approximately half the width and half the height of the principal arch; these arches are also decorated on the interior of the arch. The spandrels on each side of these triple arches feature a pressed stone star below the panel with the hotel’s name on it, and each tympanum of the principal gable has a full-width band of stone across the tympanum at about halfway up the side of the gable.

The building has cutaway corners on all four sides, providing diagonal secondary entries. Each of the cutaway corners also features a series of stone balconies, and a round-arched opening at the fourth floor, with a round window trimmed in rusticated limestone in the tympanum of the gable. The section on each elevation of the building that contains the triple sets of windows and stone spandrels is also topped with a gable parapet, with the construction date of 1885 in a stone tablet in the tympanum.

### **Historical Associations:**

The Driskill Hotel was built in 1885-1886 and has served as one of the city’s premier hotels and business meeting sites since the time of its construction. The hotel offered luxury accommodations for travelers, and its ballrooms were the sites of governors’ inaugurals, weddings, and other state and local functions.

Colonel Jesse Driskill purchased the property at the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Brazos Streets in 1884, demolishing the old feed store which had been on the site. Driskill, a Tennessean, made his money in the cattle business before moving to Austin around 1870, driving cattle to railheads in Kansas. He decided to build a first-class hotel in Austin, and hired local architect Jasper N. Preston to design the building. Preston, born in upstate New York in 1832, was raised and educated in Lansing, Michigan. He moved to Austin in 1875, and began a successful architectural career, designing business buildings, such as the Tips Hardware Building on Congress Avenue, and the Hannig Building on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street. He also designed many homes and churches in the city, as well as serving as the supervising architect on the new State Capitol on the 1880s. After designing the Driskill Hotel, he moved to Los Angeles, California.

Preston designed a monumental four-story Romanesque Revival building for Driskill's hotel, using local materials. The arches in the porticos on the south and east elevations of the building were reputed to be the largest in the state.

Work began on the hotel in January, 1885. The brick and limestone were both local, but Driskill and Preston obtained the plate glass, hardware, tile, and other materials during a trip to the East Coast. Driskill envisioned a first-class hotel for Austin, and chose only the finest materials for the building. The hotel had all of the modern conveniences of the time, including steam heat, a hydraulic elevator, and an outside window for every room. The hotel opened to great fanfare and celebration in December, 1886. The Driskill was quickly accepted by Austinites as a social hub – Governor Sul Ross held his inaugural ball at the hotel in January, 1887, beginning a long tradition of the Driskill's status as the epicenter of political life in Austin and Texas. Besides Sul Ross, Texas governors Hobby, Ma Ferguson, Dan Moody, and Ann Richards also held their inaugural balls at the hotel.

Driskill's association with the hotel was short-lived. He lost a great deal of money in the winter of 1886-1887 when a hard winter following a long drought decimated his cattle business. At the same time, S.E. McIlhenny, who leased the hotel from Driskill, moved to Galveston to manage the Beach Hotel there, and the Driskill Hotel closed. Tom Smith, who had been the manager of the Raymond House Hotel on Congress Avenue, re-opened the hotel in January, 1888, but Driskill sold the hotel that same year to J.M. ("Doc") Day.

The hotel flourished with the completion of the new State Capitol in 1888. The Driskill had a telegraph office, news and cigar stand, and a drug store fountain. The hotel also became known as a fine dining establishment in downtown Austin, with a large and exotic menu. However, Day's investment in the hotel outweighed the amount of business, and he sold the hotel in 1893 to actor Maurice Curtis, who assumed Day's mortgage notes on the building. When Maurice Curtis defaulted on the notes in 1894, the hotel was purchased at auction by C.H. Silliman, a Fort Worth banker. In 1895, Major George W. Littlefield, who had opened his bank in the southeast corner of the hotel in 1890, purchased the building from Silliman, and began a modernization campaign, installing a new electrical system, long distance telephone service, an ice plant, a steam laundry, and adding 28 rooms to the hotel. Littlefield ran the Driskill until 1903. Dr. E.P. Wilmot, a banking rival of Littlefield's, purchased the hotel in 1906 and installed W.L. Stark as the manager, a position he retained until his retirement in the 1950s.

The first-class hotel market in Austin changed dramatically in the early 1920s with the construction of the Stephen F. Austin Hotel at 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Congress Avenue. For the first time, the Driskill had real competition for the high-end clientele. The Driskill responded by adding capacity to the old structure at 6<sup>th</sup> and Brazos by converting the older guest rooms into smaller rooms, and then constructed the annex tower, which extended the hotel from 6<sup>th</sup> Street through to 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The annex tower was designed by the El Paso architectural firm of Trost and Trost in 1928, and was completed in 1930 as a high-rise.

H. Brown of Highland Resources purchased the hotel in 1953, and began a major renovation, modernizing the rooms, lobby, and installing air conditioning. The old main entrance of the hotel on 6<sup>th</sup> Street was blocked off, eliminating the old pass-through between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. The hotel suffered several fires in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as low occupancy rates; as a result, the hotel closed in 1969, although the private clubs and several businesses in the hotel building remained open. The furnishings of the hotel were auctioned off in 1969, and the tower portion of the hotel was threatened with demolition and the construction of a new high-rise glass and steel tower in its place. People throughout Austin and Texas decried the fate of the old hotel, and a group of civic leaders, led by local architect Max Brooks, organized the Driskill Hotel Corporation, which bought the tower portion of the hotel, leased the 1885

historic portion, and began a campaign to renovate, preserve, and rehabilitate the buildings. The Driskill re-opened in 1973 with a grand celebration of preservationists, owners and civil leaders; the inaugural party was attended by representatives and descendants of every Texas governor since the opening of the hotel. The civic group sold the tower portion of the hotel, and assigned the lease to the historic 1886 portion to Braniff Hotels, which pledged a massive restoration program. Braniff sold the tower portion of the hotel and assigned the lease on the historic portion in 1980 to a California hotel group, which also announced a restoration program for the hotel. The hotel tower changed hands again in the 1980s, but in 1987, the mortgage holder had to foreclose on the tower portion of the property.

The Great American Life Insurance Company of Los Angeles purchased the tower portion of the Driskill, and assumed the lease on the historic section of the hotel in 1995. The new owners embarked upon a \$30 million restoration program, which began in 1996. Every aspect of the hotel was restored to its original grandeur over a three-year period. On December 31, 1999, the hotel hosted a grand re-opening celebration. All proceeds benefitted Austin-area charitable organizations. In 2005, Lowe Enterprises acquired the tower portion of the hotel and assumed the lease on the historic section; they spent \$4.2 million upgrading all hotel guestrooms. In 2013, an affiliate of Hyatt Hotels Corporation acquired the tower portion, assumed the lease on the historic section, and took over the management of the hotel, with planned investments of \$8 million in upgrades.

**Community Value:**

The Driskill Hotel has been an Austin icon since the time of its construction.

**PARCEL NO.:** 0206030712

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** LOT 11&12 & N 12X80FT & S 34X100' OF E OF LT 9 & N22' OF E100' & S24' LT 10  
BLOCK 069 ORIGINAL CITY (TOTAL SQ FT 25120)

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX ABATEMENT:** \$267,429 (income-producing; no cap).

**APPRAISED VALUE:** \$36,676,565

**PRESENT USE:** Hotel

**CONDITION:** Excellent

**PRESENT OWNER:**

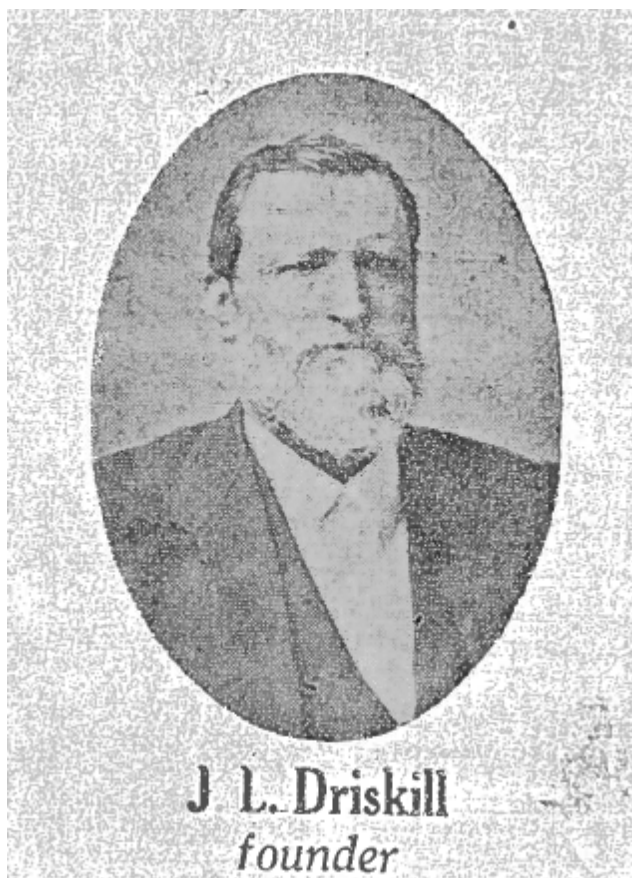
Highland Resources, Inc.  
211 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 709  
Austin, Texas 78701

**DATE BUILT:** ca. 1885-1886

**ALTERATIONS/ADDITIONS:** The building has been restored to its historic appearance.

**ORIGINAL OWNER(S):** Col. Jesse Driskill

**OTHER HISTORICAL DESIGNATIONS:** Individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.



Colonel Jesse Lincoln Driskill, founder of the hotel



Advertisement from the Austin Daily Statesman  
November 9, 1899



The Driskill Hotel.

Undated historic photograph, but likely 1901. George W. Littlefield opened his bank in the southeast corner of the hotel in 1890. The façade to the left faces 6<sup>th</sup> Street; the façade to the right faces Brazos Street.



View east on 6<sup>th</sup> Street from Congress Avenue shows the early scale of the hotel.

FINEST ROOMS WITH BATH IN THE SOUTH  
ELECTRIC LIGHT AND STEAM HEAT THROUGHOUT.



**The DRISKILL**  
*American Plan*

G. W. LITTLEFIELD,  
PROPRIETOR.  
IRWIN DANIEL,  
MANAGER.

**RATES**  
\$3.00 TO \$5.00 PER DAY.

**AUSTIN, TEXAS.**

STATE HEADQUARTERS T. P. A.  
ALSO POST "F" T. P. A.

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Undated advertisement for the Driskill Hotel, but prior to 1903, when Littlefield sold the hotel.

"The Home of Southern Hospitality"



**The DRISKILL**

EXTENDS  
A Personal Invitation

- to old and new students and to faculty members . . . . .
- to make the DRISKILL their down-town headquarters.

**The Driskill Hotel**  
W. L. STARK, Manager

Undated advertisement

# Texas Hotel Polishes Its 'Diamond'

By Janis Lynn Knebl  
Special to The Christian Science Monitor  
Austin, Texas

"Finest hotel south of St. Louis"—that's the way advertisements 75 years ago described the Driskill Hotel here. Yet there were no screens on the mammoth windows, no telephones, no electric lights, and no steam heat.

Preparing to celebrate its diamond anniversary in December, the Driskill maintains its reputation as a colorful place to stay in Texas' capital city.

Built by Col. Jessie L. Driskill, a hard-living cattleman, the building was finished in 1885. News of Colonel Driskill's inn spread. Furnishings worth an estimated \$50,000 were purchased in the East; and, when they passed through the hands of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad, representatives were quick to sense the shipment's ultimate value. They contacted the owner and received permission to use the Driskill in a set of advertisements, portraying the hotel as "the Winter Resort for the Frozen North."

## Property Sold

In 1887, Driskill sold the property, and thereafter it changed hands a number of times. The Driskill Hotel Company, current owner, acquired the property in 1906.

Each proprietor repaired the structure and added equipment, yet changed little of the Driskill's outward appearance. Early improvements included an ice factory and an electric light plant. To insure patrons an ample supply of water, the artesian well under the building was tapped; and native lumber, found stored in the hotel, was used in 1923 to build a coffee bar.

The skylight, which had fascinated visitors, was enclosed after

bats from the countryside infested the rotunda and eluded all capture attempts. A 12-story annex was added later.

From its beginning the Driskill has bragged of its satisfied visitors. Walter P. Stuart of Dallas was so impressed with the service when he visited the hotel on his wedding trip in 1895 that he wanted to return on his golden anniversary. A postcard request for a room was returned with an apology; a convention had taken over the hotel for the period desired, and there was no room available.

## Situation Explained

An Austin friend intervening for Mr. Stuart explained the situation to J. L. Stark, the manager. Realizing the significance of the request, Mr. Stark found room space.

What was the old hotel like?

Each of the principal façades of pressed brick, dressed with white limestone, loomed up like a palace. Stone carvings of Colonel Driskill and his sons, J. W. (Bud) and A. W. (Tobe) were placed on columns at each of the three entrances along with symbols of the longhorn, cherubim and seraphim.

With the opening of the grand hotel, theatrical managers had no trouble booking the best talent in the profession, such as Edwin Booth, Sol Smith Russell, and Helena Modjeska. After the opera or play, the theater crowd made its way to the Driskill.

## Judge 'Unseated'

Old-timers remember when Chief Justice Reuben R. Gaines was host at a formal five-course dinner party. As a young lady entered the room, the judge, a true gentleman, stood up. The waiter, trying to anticipate his every move, thought that he was going to carve the turkey. Quick-

ly and quietly he pulled the chair back to give the judge more room. The young lady seated, the judge sat down, too—pulling the cloth, food, and silverware to the floor with him.

The first formal affair in the Crystal Ballroom was the inaugural ball of Gov. L. S. Ross. Panels and draperies in the ballroom were of a specially woven fabric with heavily threaded designs in beige, rose, and blue. Enriching the scene were great corridors which took an estimated 1,500 square yards of velvet carpeting.

In the center of the room, hung the ebony crystalled ball which gave the room its name. It was to observe the political fortunes of many in the 60 years it hung in the room. In 1952 it was replaced by an elaborate chandelier from New Orleans. The crystal ball now decorates a rival hotel.

Perhaps the most talked-of room is the Maximilian Room, with its gold-leaf mirrors designed for the Empress Carlotta of Mexico as a wedding gift from her husband Emperor Maximilian. Framed in rich fabric panels, draperies, and carpeting, the eight hand-carved mirrors reflect all events in the room.

A gilt medallion, rumored to be an exact likeness of the Empress, is placed in a cameo effect above the center of each mirror. Carlotta never saw the mirrors, and they were no viewed by the public until the Driskill purchased them in 1930. Maximilian had ordered them sent to San Antonio for safe keeping while his government remained unstable.

A fine hotel, a beautiful hotel. The Driskill cannot look back and see itself. It is itself today, the colorful Driskill of 1885.

Article in the Christian Science Monitor, January 3, 1961





**DRISKILL HOTEL AT EAST SEVENTH AND CONGRESS**  
Historic hotel will close Tuesday (Staff photo by John Yates)

## 'Driskill Era' Coming to End

May 30, 1969

By ROWLAND NETHAWAY  
Staff Writer

For the first time since 1886, the Driskill Hotel will close its rooms to the public next Tuesday.

Hotel manager Blake Sweett said Thursday that parts of the hotel will remain open on an indefinite basis. These include the Citadel Club, Driskill Club, and the dining room, plus the bar, beauty and flower shops.

Sweett said the closing is timed with the adjournment of the Legislature since about 65 legislators and lobbyists are staying at the hotel.

Some hope still exists for the historic old hotel in the form of Austin architect Max Brooks, who heads a Save-the-Driskill group.

Brooks said Thursday that the situation was "still in the category of being looked into." He said that he has been in touch with Ralph O'Conner, president of Highland

Resources, Inc., of Houston, owners of the hotel, but that there were no new developments.

Sweett said that he was sorry to see the hotel close for historical reasons but that it was difficult "to keep it in competition with the newer properties."

The Driskill Hotel first opened its doors on December 26, 1886. A Northern newsman on hand at the opening wrote that the new Driskill in Austin was "the finest hotel south of St. Louis—a magnificent hotel whose appointments would be an ornament to St. Louis or San Francisco."

The original part of the hotel was built by Colonel Jesse L. Driskill, a Texas cattleman who told his builders to put only the finest of materials into his new hotel. He said he wasted it constructed so a deer would never sag. People at the Driskill Thursday said that none of the doors has sagged yet.

When the Driskill was built there were no telephones, no steam heat and no screens on the windows. But it was still, for miles around, the center for all elegant gatherings, parties and grand balls.

The rooms were heated by fireplaces and had mirrors large enough for the young ladies to see the edges of their wide ruffled dresses. There also were large walnut wardrobes and even a button to push in, bringing the bell boys running in each room.

The Driskill Hotel has always been a stopping place for visiting businessmen. But in those days, the businessmen rode up to the hotel on a horse with only saddle bags as baggage. A livery stable, across the way on Seventh Street cared for the guests' horses.

Such theatrical greats as Anna Held, Stuart Robson, Edwin Booth and many others have their signatures on the old hotel registers.

But those were the old days and Tuesday the "Fabulous Driskill" is closing. About 180 employees will be let go with about \$200,000 of the hotel's money in severance pay. Only sixty employees will remain on to work in the clubs and shops.

Driskill manager Sweett said, "Within the organization we have over 600 years of hotel experience."

One of the employees, who worked over twenty years experience to the organization, said Thursday, "It just won't seem the same not coming back to this grand old hotel every morning."

A lot of people will feel that way.

Austin History Center

# Reprieve Won By Driskill

By BARBRA WORLEY  
Staff Writer

It's not saved yet, but the Driskill Hotel received a four-month "reprieve" Thursday when a group of Austinites announced formation of the Driskill Hotel Corporation and a plan to restore the "old" Driskill to its former elegance — along with a couple of significant additions.

The additions are a new 18-story ultra-modern tower adjacent to the original building and a 150-car parking garage across the street on the present Driskill parking lot.

Austin architect Max Brooks, spokesman for the corporation, said its aims are twofold: to save the Driskill and to create for the city of Austin "something it really needs — a fine hotel and convention facility."

The plans include a convention center which would utilize the second and third floors of the 19th Century building situated at 6th St. and Brazos. The floors would be connected by escalators, providing a meeting hall with a seating capacity of more than 1,000.

Brooks said the total value of the project, excluding the parking garage, will be in excess of \$8 million, but declined to estimate at this time what the "excess" would be.

Plans call for the corporation to buy the land where the present 12-story Driskill addition is located — on 7th St. — and to lease both the original building and the parking area on a 99-year basis.

The present addition will be torn down and replaced by the 18-story structure.

Ralph O'Connor, president of Highland Resources, Inc., of Houston, owners of the Driskill, said the Driskill Hotel Corporation had been given an option for the purchase and the leases.

The option expires Oct. 1.

O'Connor said his firm extended "complete cooperation and support" in the project, and described it as "the most feasible plan put forth" to achieve the objectives of saving the Driskill and providing Austin with a "first-class hotel facility."

Brooks stressed that the success of the project is contingent in large part on public support.

"We are developing plans now for citizen participation through long-range guaranteed reservations of rooms," he said. He said ideas the corporation is discussing are aimed at "giving many people an opportunity to show in a small way their



THE 'NEW DRISKILL'—This artist's concept shows the proposed new Driskill Hotel facilities as viewed from 7th Street looking south. On the right is the proposed 18-story Driskill Hotel Tower, to be constructed on the site of the present 12-story addition. On the left

and in the background is the original four-story Driskill Hotel, located on the corner of 6th Street and Brazos. In front of it is a glassed-in facility which was not described in detail in the announcement of plans for the project.

Interest in preserving this Texas landmark."

He added that more detailed information on the corporation's plans should be available "within two weeks."

Other principals involved in the corporation are attorney Clint Small Jr., Sen. Charles Herring, banker Tom McCrummen, architect Howard Barr, Malcolm Milburn of Capital Steel, architect David Graeber, Dick Reynolds of Reynolds-Penland, architect Roy White, public relations executives George Christian, Banks Miller Jr., Bob Hunt and attorney John J. McKay. All of Austin.

Brooks said response to the long-term reservation plan was "critical to provide funds to fill the gap" between the amount of money the corporation can raise and the actual cost of the project. No estimate was given of the cost of the purchase from Highland.

The interior of the original four-story building will be completely remodeled, and the exterior will be restored.

The Crystal Ballroom and the Maximilian Room on the second floor will be retained, but remodeled to provide a perimeter for the convention floor.

The original building's present furnishings will be included in

the "lease" agreement, and Brooks said there is a possibility of establishing a facility to display items of historical and artistic significance.

With the October date as a deadline for financing and architectural planning, the corporation has set a late fall goal for work to begin on demolishing the 12-story tower. By January 1, 1974, according to the corporation's plans, full-scale remodeling of the old Driskill and construction of the Driskill Hotel Tower will have begun.

The corporation has set Sept. 1, 1971, as the date for the hotel's grand opening.

Brooks added that the corporation's goal was to provide Austin with a hotel "on a level with the finest hotels in the country."

FOR RELEASE SUNDAY, JAN. 21, 1973

A guest list of historic proportions is forming for the Austin Heritage Society's February 10-11 weekend gala marking formal reopening of the famous Driskill Hotel in downtown Austin.

At least one blood relative of each Texas Governor since 1886--in some cases, several--will be special guests for a Saturday night Grand Ball and a Sunday afternoon Tea Dance staged by the Heritage Society as a benefit for its Capital City projects. Each Governor will be represented in a formal Presentation ceremony slated for the Ball, and the Jim Hogg Suite on the hotel's mezzanine, where political VIPS have been billeted through the years, will feature special tables for the honorees. Again, at the Tea Dance, gubernatorial relatives and descendants will be special guests.

Governor John Ireland (1883-1887) will be represented by Mrs. J. Chryst Dougherty, a great-granddaughter, and Mr. Dougherty of Austin, while Governor Lawrence (Sul) Ross (1887-91) will be represented by his grandson, Lt. Col. Neville P. Clark of San Antonio. Hosting Col. Clark will be close Austin friends, Brig. Gen. and Mrs. John C. Horton.

Miss Ima Hogg of Houston, prominent Texas historic preservationist and one-time Honorary Chairman of the Austin Heritage Society's annual Antiques Show, will be at the parties representing her father, Governor James S. Hogg (1891-95). Her hosts will be Mr. and Mrs. Albert Jones of Austin.

Governor Charles A. Culberson (1895-99) will be represented by his great-grandnephew, Bill Poddock of Houston, and Mrs. Poddock, while Governor Joseph D. Sayers (1899-03) will be represented by his nephew, Ralph Sayers, and Mrs. Sayers of Houston. Judge and Mrs. Bob Shannon will be weekend hosts to the Sayerses.

Governor S.W.T. Lanham (1903-07), who made news in Austin when he calmly walked his family from a downtown hotel up Congress Avenue to his inauguration ceremony at the Capitol, will be represented by a grandson, the Rev. Sam Lanham of Houston, and Mrs. Lanham. Hosts to the Lanhams will be Mr. and Mrs. James Motheral and Mrs. Fritz Lanham of Austin.

Governor Thomas M. Campbell (1907-11) will be represented at the parties by a grandson, Thomas Wommack, and Mrs. Wommack of Austin, and a great-granddaughter, Diane Wommack Daniel (Mrs. Price Daniel, Jr.).

Governor James E. Ferguson (1915-17) will be represented by a grandson, James Stuart Watt of Austin, and Mrs. Watt. Representing Governor William P. Hobby (1917-21) will, of course, be his son, Lt. Gov. William P. Hobby of Houston and Austin, and Mrs. Hobby, while the other Hobby honoree will be his widow, a prominent Texan in her own right, Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby of Houston. Senator and Mrs. Charles Herring will be hosts to the Hobbys.

Hallie Maud Neff (Mrs. Frank) Wilcox of Waco will represent her father, Governor Pat Neff (1921-25), and will have as her Austin hosts Mr. and Mrs. Sam Wood. Governor Miriam A. Ferguson ~~1925-27~~ (1925-27 and 1933-35) will be represented by her grandson, George Nalle, Jr., of Austin and Mrs. Nalle.

Governor Dan Moody (1927-31) will be represented by his widow; his son Dan Moody, Jr., and Mrs. Moody; and his daughter, Mrs. Nancy Moody Hudson, all of Austin. Representing Governor Ross Sterling (1931-33) will be his son, Walter Sterling, and Mrs. Sterling of Houston. Their weekend hosts will be long-time friends, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Caven.

Governor James V. Allred (1935-39) will be represented by a son, David Allred, and Mrs. Allred of . Hosting them will be Mr. and Mrs. Paul Bolton, who were friends of the Governor.

Governor W. Lee O'Daniel (1939-41) will be represented by his daughter, remembered as "Molly" and now Mrs. Richard E. Danielson of Los Angeles. Mrs. Danielson will be accompanied to Austin by her entire family, occupying a suite at the Driskill. Hosts to the Danielsons will be Mr. and Mrs. Clyde W. Smith.

Governor Coke R. Stevenson (1941-47) hopes to be present for the ceremonies, but he will also be represented by such family members as Mrs. Stevenson, Mr. and Mrs. Coke Stevenson, Jr., of Austin, and his daughter, of

Representing Governor Beauford Jester (1947-49) will be his widow, now Mrs. Josh Morris of Texarkana, or a daughter, Mrs. Tom Berry of Houston, and Mr. Berry. Hosting them will be Land Commissioner and Mrs. Bob Landis Armstrong.

Governor ~~and Mrs.~~ Allan Shivers (1949-57) and Mrs. Shivers will be present for the festivities, as will Governor Price Daniel (1957-63) and Mrs. Daniel. Both families still reside in Austin, Governor Shivers as Chairman of the Austin National Bank and Governor Daniel as a Justice of the Texas Supreme Court.

Making every effort to adjust his schedule to be present is Governor John B. Connally (1963-69), ~~and~~ who will be accompanied by Mrs. Connally, while Governor ~~and~~ Preston Smith (1969-73) and Mrs. Smith plan to return to the Capital City from Lubbock.

Governor and Mrs. Dolph Briscoe will be making one of their first official appearances in Austin since their inaugural ceremonies on January 16.

Impressive as the aforementioned list of gubernatorial VIPS may be, it does not include numerous other members of Governors' families who will be among the party guests. Only Texas Governor whose descendants have not yet been able to accept invitations ~~is~~ is Governor Oscar B. Colquitt (1911-15),

for whom relatives have been located in Florida and California.

General Chairman for the Driskill opening parties is Mrs. Bob R. Armstrong of Austin, who may be contacted through the Heritage Society office, P.O. Box 2113, Austin, 78767, for information regarding patron and regular tickets for the Grand Ball, sponsor and regular tickets for the Tea Dance. All proceeds from the parties will benefit the Austin Heritage Society.

The Driskill Hotel, first opened on December 20, 1886, is now the property of the Driskill Hotel Corporation, a publicly-owned company. It is being operated by the Braniff International Hotel Division.

Copy for a story on the 1973 re-opening gala



## Fact Sheet

### **The Property:**

Built in 1886 as the showplace of a cattle baron, The Driskill remains a landmark of legendary Texas hospitality. Located on 6th Street in the heart of downtown Austin, the luxurious, historic hotel is convenient to all that the city has to offer and in walking distance to the Texas State Capitol, Paramount Theatre, convention center, ballet, opera, symphony, fine dining, shopping, and Austin's 6th Street music scene. Known as the "Live Music Capital of the World®," Austin is home to nearly 200 music venues, many also within walking distance of The Driskill. Setting the standard for elegance in Austin, The Driskill is among the world's finest hotels, offering an unforgettable level of luxury and service.

### **History:**

Colonel Jesse Lincoln Driskill opened his namesake hotel on December 20, 1886. The four-story Richardson-Romanesque structure cost \$400,000 to complete (the equivalent of \$92 million today). The Driskill hosted its first inaugural ball for newly elected Texas Governor Sul Ross two weeks after opening, starting a political tradition – Texas governors such as William P. Hobby, Miriam (Ma) Ferguson, Dan Moody, John Connally and Ann Richards all staged their inaugural balls on the grand Mezzanine, and Lyndon B. Johnson celebrated his election to the Senate in 1948 and his 1964 Presidential campaign victory at The Driskill. Over the years, the hotel's ownership shifted several times, and in 1929 a 12-story annex was added to the original structure's north side. 129 years later, The Driskill remains Austin's premiere site for luxurious events and memorable experiences in the heart of downtown Austin.

### **Accommodations:**

With 189 guestrooms and suites, The Driskill offers a variety of accommodation types:

#### **Guestrooms:**

- Curio
- Vintage King or Queen
- Vintage Two Queens
- Cityscape King or Queen
- Cityscape Two Queens
- Senate
- Historic Balcony King
- Victorian Junior Suite

#### **14 Suites, Including:**

- Cattle Baron
- Yellow Rose Bridal
- Renaissance Bridal
- Heritage Bridal
- Brazos
- Governors
- Victorian
- Primrose
- Lyndon & Lady Bird Johnson Presidential

### **Meetings & Events:**

Featuring more than 18,000 exquisite square feet of meeting space and nine lavish meeting rooms, The Driskill makes doing business a pleasure. With classic elegance, smart audiovisual and wireless capability, The Driskill is the ideal location for meetings and events in Austin.

604 Brazos Street | Austin, Texas 78701

Phone: 512-439-1234 | Fax: 512-474-2214 | Web: [www.driskillhotel.com](http://www.driskillhotel.com)



# THE DRISKILL

*Austin, Texas*

**Dining:**

**1886 Café & Bakery** serves modern Texas comfort food along with a variety of signature dishes from the hotel's long and storied history as a culinary destination. Led by Executive Chef Troy Knapp, 1886 Café & Bakery's menu combines time-honored Texas traditions with creative preparations. 1886 Bakery, with Executive Pastry Chef Tony Sansalone at the helm, specializes in delectable pastries, fresh-baked breads and Austin's finest custom-crafted cakes and pies.

**The Driskill Grill** is a ten-year recipient of the AAA Four-Diamond Award, *Wine Spectator's* Award of Excellence, and has been recognized as one of the country's "Top 25 Hotel Restaurants" and one of the "Top 5 Most Romantic Restaurants in Austin" by Zagat. Focusing on fresh, locally sourced, Texas produce and game, Executive Chef Troy Knapp and Chef de Cuisine Brian Contreras craft each menu daily to reflect the season's best ingredients.

**The Driskill Bar**, with its iconic Texas décor, live music and history as a political power meeting place, offers an incredible array of craft cocktails, local beers and small plates. Acknowledged twice as one of *Garden & Gun* magazine's "Top 50 Southern Bars" and one of *Food & Wine's* and *USA Today's* "Best Hotel Bars," The Driskill Bar is the perfect setting for imbibing in Austin.





### Historic Timeline

**1824** – Jesse Lincoln Driskill is born in Tennessee

**1849** – Jesse Driskill comes to Texas by way of Missouri

**1857** – Jesse Driskill enters the cattle business

**1869** – Driskill moves with his wife Nancy Elizabeth Jane Day, four daughters and two sons to Austin, the westernmost metropolis in the state at that time. Driskill has already made and lost a fortune during the Civil War selling cattle to the Confederacy, where he is given the honorary title of “Colonel.”

**1872** – A statewide election permanently establishes Austin as the capital of Texas

**1880** – Colonel Driskill becomes a wealthy cattle baron, established businessman, and active civic leader known throughout the region. Driskill decides to build a luxurious grand hotel in his adopted hometown of Austin, one that would rival the palaces of New York, Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco, to serve as a showpiece for the frontier town.

**1884** – Driskill purchases the lot at the corner of Brazos and Pecan (later renamed 6th Street), for a total of \$7,500. The Driskill becomes the talk of the town.

**1886** – The grand opening of The Driskill is heralded by a special supplement in the Daily Statesman that proudly touts The Driskill as “One of the Finest Hotels in the Whole Country.” The entire cost is estimated at \$400,000 – the equivalent of \$92 million today. An impressive new state capitol building with the largest dome ever constructed in the United States is begun. There is talk of building a dam and power plant on the Colorado River.

**1887** –

**January** – less than two weeks after the grand opening, The Driskill hosts its first inaugural ball for newly elected Texas Governor Sul Ross. A tradition is quickly established. Later, governors including William P. Hobby, Miriam “Ma” Ferguson, Dan Moody, John Connally and Ann Richards staged their inaugural balls at The Driskill.

**May** – The Driskill General Manager, S.E. McIlheney and half the staff, including the headwaiter and bartender, are hired away by Galveston’s Beach Hotel. This loss of key staff proves disastrous for the new hotel; The Driskill closes its doors.

**October** – Colonel Driskill re-opens the hotel under new management, but Driskill has larger problems than keeping The Driskill alive; his very livelihood is threatened by a nationwide drought.

**1888** – The Driskill family loses their fortune when a severe drought is followed by an exceptionally cold winter, decimating a herd of more than 3,000 cattle. Driskill is forced to sell the hotel.

## THE DRISKILL

*Austin, Texas*

**May** – The new owner of The Driskill, the Colonel's brother-in-law, "Doc" Day, continues the positioning of The Driskill as Austin's premier site for lavish events by hosting international dignitaries for the dedication of the state's new granite capitol.

**1890** – In May, Colonel Driskill dies of a stroke. Four months later, the hotel purchased a life-sized portrait of its creator, which now presides over the opulent lobby.

**1893** – "Doc" Day trades The Driskill for a California ranch and vineyard, plus \$14,000 in cash to M.B. Curtis, an actor known as Sam'l of Posen.

**1894** – The Driskill is sold at auction for \$76,000 to a group of New York investors and quickly resold for \$75,000 to the British holders of its mortgage.

**1895** – Major George R. Littlefield, a cattle baron, banker and president of the Texas Rangers, acquires the hotel for \$106,000 in cash and becomes the fifth owner. He vows the hotel will never close again. Littlefield promises and delivers a first-class renovation that costs more than \$60,000, creating a new era for The Driskill and for Austin. He introduces the latest in improved systems, including electric lighting and steam heating. Littlefield decorates the ceilings with oil-painted frescoes, and installs 28 lavatories with bathtubs in the hotel and electric fans in every room. He also opens a bank in the lobby of The Driskill; the original vault and door remain today.

**1903** – Littlefield sells the hotel at a loss of more than \$25,000 to Edward Seeling for \$80,000 in cash.

**1908** – A controversial meeting held by the Daughters of the Texas Republic to determine the fate of the Alamo results in the governor being forced to intervene. That same year, the hotel stages its first "election watch" party using a stereopticon to project national results against a large outdoor backdrop.

**1909** – A barber shop and women's spa open in the storefront facing 6th Street, consisting of eight chairs and numerous electric baths supplied by the hotel's own artesian well. Women patronized the Ladies' Hairdressing Parlor for both a bath and an electric massage. Relaxing in the healing "sulphur" waters, or Turkish baths, quickly becomes a popular attraction at The Driskill, as does visiting psychic healers and purchasing elixirs from the medicine men that set up shop in the hotel.

**1919** – Governor William P. Hobby's inaugural ball is perhaps the most spectacular event to date. It features several orchestras playing in stereo from behind forests of ferns, amidst lavish decorations resembling a European Court.

**1930** – The new annex is completed, and private baths are added to the 60 suites in the original structure. The Maximilian Room is created. Formerly the Men's Parlor and Smoking Room, it draws its name from eight famous Austrian gold leaf framed mirrors once belonging to Emperor Maximilian of Mexico and his wife, Empress Carlotta. Reportedly the "most beautiful woman in Europe," it is Carlotta's image that adorns each frame. No one knows how the mirrors ended up in the San Antonio antique shop from which they were purchased.

# THE DRISKILL

*Austin, Texas*

**1934** – An aspiring Texas politician named Lyndon Baines Johnson meets his future wife, Lady Bird, for their first date in The Driskill Dining Room for breakfast. This starts a life-long love affair for The Driskill and the future President and First Lady of the United States.

**1948** – Lyndon B. Johnson awaits the results of his U.S. Senate race against Coke Stevenson in the Jim Hogg Suite at The Driskill. LBJ wins.

**1950** – The 6th Street entrance is closed and a dining room is built in the south corridor. During the renovation, air conditioning is added and the lobby's skylit rotunda is removed.

**1964** – Lyndon B. Johnson awaits the results of his Presidential re-election run in the Jim Hogg Suite at The Driskill. Again LBJ wins. During LBJ's Presidential tenure, The Driskill served as the headquarters for the White House Press Corps and a suite, today known as the Governor's Suite (located on the fifth floor), was permanently reserved for President Johnson.

**1969** –

**June** – The Driskill rooms close for a complete remodeling and the construction of a proposed 19-story tower. The private clubs and some shops remain open. This proposed new tower would include a modern glass façade. The tower plans fall through and demolition appears imminent.

**November** – an *Austin American-Statesman* story confirms "Driskill Hotel's Fate Sealed," with the hotel slated "to meet its end at the hands of a wrecking crew." Concerned citizens, led by the Heritage Society of Austin, rally to save her from destruction. The Driskill is declared a National Historic Landmark, and the iconic building is saved in perpetuity.

**1970** – A Save-the-Driskill community effort raises more than \$700,000 in sales of \$10 stock for the new Driskill Hotel Corporation. The re-development budget balloons to almost \$2 million once loans and corporate contributions are added.

**1973** –

**February** – The Driskill hosts a series of grand re-opening galas. More than 1,200 guests attend, including every Texas governor from the last 20 years as well as the descendants of Texas governors since 1890.

**October** – The Driskill is purchased by Braniff International Hotels from its civic owners and commits at least \$350,000 to refurbish the lobby and restore the great hotel to "its one-time splendor." Nightclub "Scandals" opens in the current-day Victorian Room. The discotheque is known as a highlight of the downtown Austin nightlife scene, and the Austin Historical Society opens and operates the "1886 Lunchroom," featuring a selection of recipes from the hotel's past as well as personal family recipes. Waitstaff is outfitted in period costume.

**1980** – The Driskill is sold by Braniff International to California-based Lara Hotels, which announces yet another renovation that will cost \$2.5 million.

**1983** – Lara Hotels sells The Driskill to Lincoln Hotel Corporation, which announces it will spend up to \$5 million in renovations, including a dramatic restoration of the columned lobby.



## THE DRISKILL

*Austin, Texas*

**1986** – Lincoln sells majority interest to the New York-based Austin Realty, Inc. The new management promises to fine-tune The Driskill for its 100th birthday celebration in December.

**1990** – CapStar, a hotel management and ownership firm based in Washington D.C., assumes a minority ownership and commits \$400,000 to renovations.

**1995** – Great American Life Insurance purchases The Driskill, proclaiming to restore the grand hotel. The massive restoration project begins, with every aspect of the hotel being restored to its original grandeur over a closure time of four years.

**1999** – December 31, a grand re-opening Millennium celebration highlights the local scene as Austinites celebrate their historic landmark hotel. All proceeds benefit Austin-area charitable organizations.

**2002** – Celebrating the history of the 1886 Lunchroom, 1886 Café & Bakery opens, serving classic Texan comfort foods.

**2003** – The Driskill Grill receives *Food & Wine* magazine's acknowledgement as home of one of the Top 10 Best New Chefs in the country, David Bull.

**2007** – Great American Life Insurance sells the property to California-based Lowe Enterprises, and The Driskill is managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts.

**2013** – Hyatt Hotels & Resorts acquires and takes over management of The Driskill, with planned investments of \$8 million in upgrades to Austin's iconic property.



### The Driskill History

Colonel Jesse Lincoln Driskill formally opened The Driskill on December 20, 1886, in his adopted hometown of Austin, Texas, as a landmark hotel to “rival the palaces in New York, Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco.”

Driskill spared no expense on the four-story, 60-room Richardson-Romanesque structure. With custom furnishings throughout and 12 corner rooms with attached baths, which was unheard of at the time, the hotel cost more than \$400,000 – the equivalent of \$92 million today. Designed by Austin architect J. N. Preston & Son, the hotel is recognized by the elaborate ornamentation of its brick and native limestone façades. In 1929, a 12-story annex was added to The Driskill’s north side, designed by architects Trost & Trost, which modernized the original structure and increased the total number of hotel rooms to 350.

Completed two years prior to the Texas State Capitol building, The Driskill served as an epicenter of political activity, hosting inaugural balls for Governors Sul Ross, William P. Hobby, Miriam (Ma) Ferguson, Dan Moody, John Connally and Ann Richards. President Lyndon B. Johnson received the successful results of his 1948 Senate campaign and his 1964 Presidential election in the hotel’s Jim Hogg Parlor, and President George W. Bush hosted his 2000 selection of cabinet members on the Mezzanine.

In 1895 new owner Major George R. Littlefield opened Austin’s American National Bank in the lobby of the hotel; the original vault remains there today. In 1899, the hotel hosted the first telephone in Central Texas, and in the early days of radio housed Central Texas’ first station (now known as KLBJ-FM) and Austin’s first television station, KTBC-TV, both owned by Lady Bird Johnson.

Closed briefly in the fall of 1969, the *Austin American-Statesman* ran an article declaring “The Driskill Hotel’s Fate Sealed,” outlining plans that called for the demolition of the iconic Austin landmark. The citizens of Austin responded quickly. In partnership with the Austin Heritage Society, now Preservation Austin, citizens raised more than \$700,000 through \$10 stock sales to investors. The Driskill was named a National Historic Landmark on November 25, 1969, and reopened on February 10, 1973.

A floor-to-ceiling renovation closed the property from 1996-1999. The renovation took the total number of guest rooms and suites to 189, giving the hotel the structure it maintains today. Features of The Driskill include the magnificent columned lobby, fine dining establishment The Driskill Grill, casual eatery 1886 Café & Bakery, the iconic The Driskill Bar and more than 18,000 feet of exquisite meeting space.

The legendary Driskill Hotel remains an iconic and beloved landmark in the heart of downtown Austin, 129 years after opening. Located in the center of the city, guests of The Driskill have access to the best of the “Live Music Capital of the World®,” Austin’s vibrant culinary scene, the trails of Lady Bird Lake and nearly 200 music venues within walking distance.

# THE DRISKILL

*Austin, Texas*

## Historical Timeline



### 1800's

1824 – Jesse Lincoln Driskill is born in Tennessee.

1849 – Driskill arrives in Texas by way of Missouri.

1857 – Driskill enters the cattle business.

1869 – Driskill moves to Austin with his wife, Nancy Elizabeth Jane Day and their four daughters & two sons. At the time, the city was the westernmost metropolis in the state of Texas.

Driskill has already made and lost a fortune during the Civil War selling cattle to the Confederacy, where he is given the honorary title of "Colonel."

1872 – A statewide election permanently establishes Austin as the Capital of Texas.

*Early 1880's* – Colonel Driskill becomes a wealthy cattle baron, established businessman, and active civic leader known throughout the region.

Driskill decides to build a luxurious grand hotel in his adopted hometown of Austin, one that would rival the palaces of New York, Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco to serve as a showpiece for the frontier town of Austin.

1884 – Driskill purchases the lot at the corner of Brazos and Pecan (later renamed 6th Street), for a total of \$7,500. The Driskill becomes the talk of the town.

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1886 – An impressive new state capitol building with the largest dome ever constructed in the United States begins construction. At the time, there was talk of building a dam and power plant on the Colorado River.

### 1887

January 1 – less than two weeks after the grand opening, The Driskill hosts its first inaugural ball for newly elected Texas Governor Sul Ross. A tradition is quickly established. Later, governors including William P. Hobby, Miriam "Ma" Ferguson, Dan Moody, John Connally and Ann Richards staged their inaugural balls at The Driskill.

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1888 – The Driskill family loses their fortune when a severe drought is followed by an exceptionally cold winter, decimating a herd of over 3,000 cattle. Driskill is forced to sell the hotel.

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## Historical Timeline

### 1890's

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*1894* – The Driskill is sold at auction for \$76,000 to a group of New York investors and quickly resold for \$75,000 to the British holders of its mortgage.



### 1900's

*1903* – Littlefield sells the hotel at a loss of more than \$25,000 to Edward Seeling for \$80,000 in cash

*1908* – A controversial meeting held at the hotel by Daughters of the Texas Republic to determine the fate of the Alamo results in the governor being forced to intervene. That same year, the hotel stages its first "election watch" party using a stereopticon to project national results against a large outdoor backdrop.

*1909* – A barber shop & women's spa open in the storefront facing 6th Street, consisting of eight chairs and numerous electric baths supplied by the hotel's own artesian well. Women patronized the

### 1910's

*1919* – Governor William P. Hobby's inaugural ball is perhaps the most spectacular event to date. It features several orchestras playing in stereo from behind forests of ferns amidst lavish decorations resembling a European Court.

### 1930's

*1930* – The new annex is completed, and private baths are added to the 60 suites in the original structure.

The Maximilian Room is created. Formerly the Men's Parlor and Smoking Room, it draws its name from eight famous Austrian gold leaf framed mirrors once

### 1940's

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### 1950's

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# THE DRISKILL

*Austin, Texas*

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belonging to Emperor Maximilian of Mexico and his wife, Empress Carlotta.

Reportedly the "most beautiful woman in Europe," it is her image that adorns each frame. No one knows how the mirrors ended up in a San Antonio antique shop, but in 1930 they were discovered and purchased by The Driskill.

**1934** - An aspiring Texas politician named Lyndon Baines Johnson meets his future wife, Lady Bird, for their first date in The Driskill Dining Room for breakfast. This starts a life-long love affair for The Driskill and the future President and First Lady of the United States.

## 1960's

**1960** - Lyndon B. Johnson awaits the results of his Vice Presidential campaign at The Driskill. Kennedy / Johnson win.

**1964** - Lyndon B. Johnson awaits the results of his Presidential re-election run in the Jim Hogg Suite at The Driskill. Again LBJ wins. During LBJ's Presidential tenure, The Driskill served as the headquarters for the White House

Press Corps and a suite, today known as the Governor's Suite (located on the fifth floor), was permanently reserved for President Johnson.

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*The Driskill stands apart as a landmark of classic Texan hospitality, with a rich appreciation of the grace of days past and modern luxury.*

## 1970's

**1970** – A Save-the-Driskill community effort raises more than \$700,000 in sales of \$10 stock for the new Driskill Hotel Corporation. The re-development budget balloons to almost \$2 million once loans and corporate contributions are added.

**1973** – February. The Driskill hosts a Grand Re-Opening Gala. 1,200 guests attend, including the past 20 year' governors and descendants of governors since 1886.

**October**, The Driskill is purchased by Braniff International Hotels from its civic owners and commits at least \$350,000 to refurbish the lobby and restore the great hotel to "its one-time splendor."

The Austin Historical Society opens and operates the "1886 Lunchroom," featuring a selection of recipes from the hotel's past, and family recipes passed down through the ages. Waitstaff is outfitted in 1886-era costume.

## 1980's

**1980** – The Driskill is sold by Braniff International to California-based Lara Hotels, which announces yet another renovation that will cost \$2.5 million.

**1983** – Lara Hotels sells The Driskill to Lincoln Hotel Corporation, which announces it will spend up to \$5 million in renovations, including a dramatic restoration of columned lobby.

**1986** – Lincoln sells majority interest to the New York-based Austin Realty, Inc. The new management promises to fine-tune The Driskill by its 100th birthday celebration in December.

## 1990's

**1990** – CapStar, a hotel management and ownership firm based in Washington D.C., assumes a minority ownership and commits \$400,000 to renovations.

**1995** – Great American Life Insurance purchases The Driskill, proclaiming to restore the grand hotel.

**1996** – The massive restoration project begins, with every aspect of the hotel being restored to its original grandeur over a closure time of three years.

**1999** – December 31, a grand re-opening Millennium celebration highlights the local scene as Austinites celebrate the return of their historic landmark hotel. All proceeds benefit Austin-area charitable organizations.

## 2000's

**2002** – July 4, The 1886 Cafe & Bakery opens in the location where the Heritage Society of Austin originally operated the 1886 Lunchroom, reintroducing recipes from the hotel's past.

**2003** – The Driskill Grill is awarded the prestigious AAA Four Diamond Award, and gains national recognition as one of the top culinary destinations in the country.

**2005** – Lowe Enterprises acquires The Driskill, managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts, based in Englewood, CO.

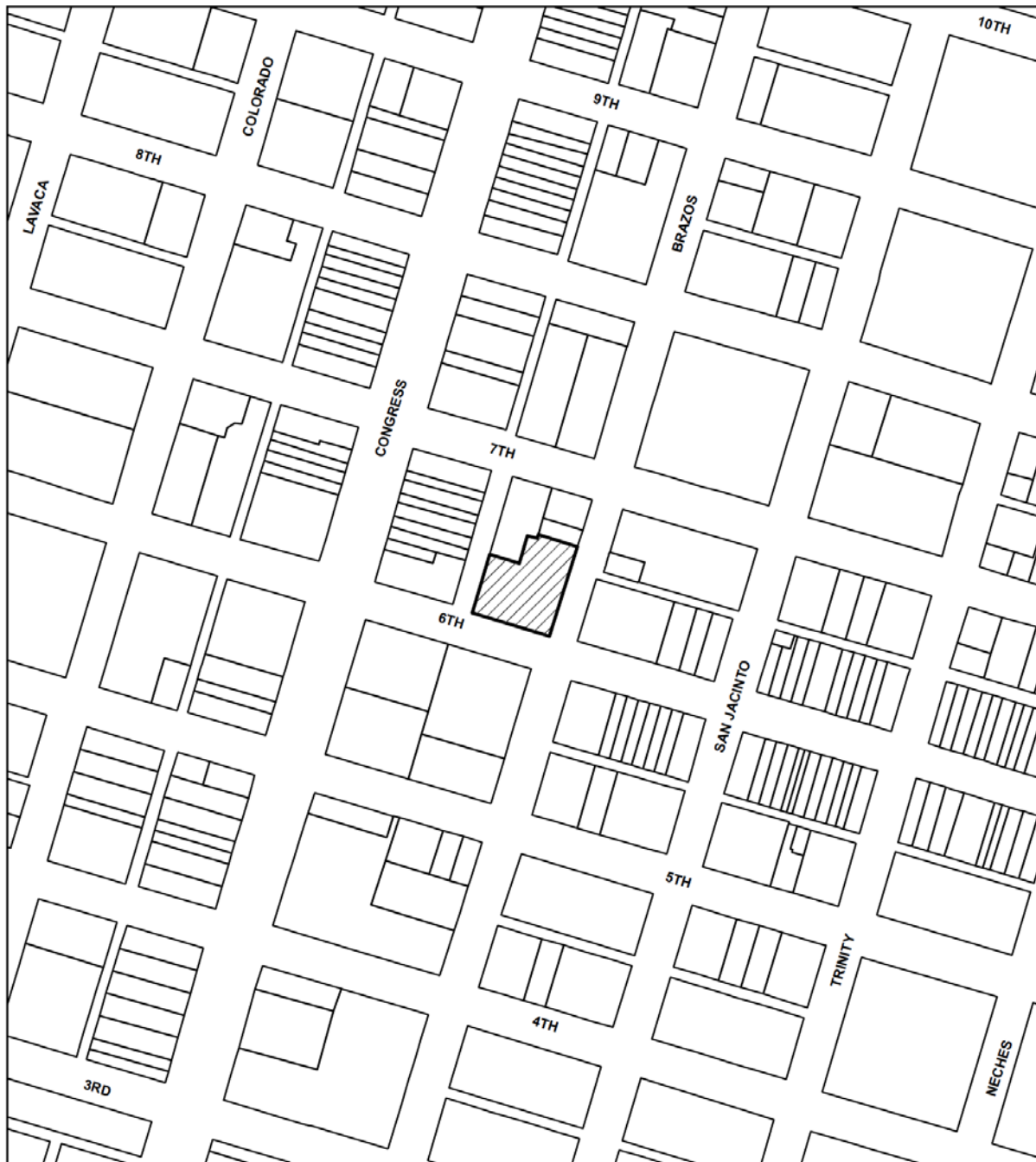
**2008** – A \$4.2 million renovation upgrades all hotel guestrooms with a design that blends historic and contemporary elements.




## 2010's

**2013** – Hyatt Hotels & Resorts acquires and takes over management of The Driskill, with planned investments of \$8 million in upgrades to Austin's iconic property.



# LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 250'

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: C14H-2017-0112  
LOCATION: 604 Brazos Street

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



**SOCIAL  
KNOWLEDGEABLE  
INFLUENTIAL**

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Philip Wiley

Kristina Witt

December 5, 2017

Steve Sadowsky, Historic Preservation Officer  
Planning and Zoning Dept.  
P.O. Box 1088  
Austin, Texas 78767

RE: Historic Zoning for the Driskill Hotel  
Case No. C14H-2017-0112

Dear Steve:

The Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association supports the proposed rezoning of the Driskill Hotel from CBD to CBD-H.

DANA's board of directors considered this matter at our meeting on December 5, 2017. We agreed that the Driskill meets the city's criteria for historic designation, and we're glad that the building will be protected for future generations.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this input. If there is anything else that would be helpful, please let us know.

Very truly yours,

Board of Directors  
Downtown Austin Associates Neighborhood Association

