

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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## **Austin Expands with New Hotels, Attractions** *Renaissance continues in Texas capital city*

Austin caters to a diverse audience of music fans, art aficionados, history buffs, sports enthusiasts, politicians and more. As the city's popularity as a travel destination grows, so does the demand for entertainment, new attractions and distinct accommodations. And Austin answers the demand with new hotels, museums and retail projects.

Austin's newest cultural landmark, the Long Center for Performing Arts, opens March 28. This world-class facility provides a permanent, acoustically perfect performance space for Austin Lyric Opera, Ballet Austin, and Austin Symphony, now in its 97<sup>th</sup> season. In addition, the Long Center will host touring Broadway shows and big-name concerts in the Bass Concert Hall. The smaller black-box theater will welcome the city's numerous comedy improv groups and independent theatrical productions. Local shows will also welcome audiences here.

In addition, several new hotels are under construction and several more have been announced, including a W Hotel and highly anticipated 21C Museum Hotel. Cranes stacked against the ever-expanding skyline tower over more than 25 residential projects in the works—primarily lofts and condos that encourage downtown living.

### **ATTRACTIONS**

**Mexican-American Cultural Center** (*now open*) – The 126,000-square-foot cultural center, located on Lady Bird Lake at the end of River Street, provides educational and community resources dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Mexican- and Native American cultural arts and heritage. Music, theatre, literature and culinary arts are only a few among the selection of available classes. The center also offers rentable space for exhibits, performances and private events.

[http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/macc\\_index.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/macc_index.htm)

**Bass Concert Hall at the University of Texas Performing Arts Center** (*under renovation from Spring 2007-Fall 2008*) – UT's flagship 3,000-seat theatre closed when the curtain dropped on the 2006-2007 season in order to complete a \$14.7 million renovation. A new glass facade will create a five-story, light-filled lobby with an elegant restaurant. The theatre itself will receive new seating and flooring, state-of-the-art acoustics, lighting and other updates.

[www.utpac.org](http://www.utpac.org)

**Lance Armstrong Bikeway** (*under construction; completion scheduled March 2008*) – The long-anticipated bikeway will enable bicyclists to travel east and west on a dedicated route through downtown.

When finished, the path will extend from Veterans Dr. at Lake Austin Blvd. on the west side of town to the Montopolis Bridge at US-183 on the east side. The path consists of a combination of off-street concrete trails, on-street striped bike lanes, and on-street signed bike routes.

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/publicworks/armstrong.htm>

**Long Center for the Performing Arts** (*under construction, grand opening March 28, 2008*) – This highly anticipated project, located at the site of the old Palmer Auditorium, is the centerpiece of a 54-acre cultural park on the shores of Lady Bird Lake. The center provides a permanent home for the Austin Symphony Orchestra, Ballet Austin and Austin Lyric Opera, as well as performance space for some 200 smaller performing arts groups in Central Texas. An Austin Music Memorial commemorates the contributions of major Austin artists and music industry professionals.

[www.artscenterstage.org](http://www.artscenterstage.org)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Street Retail District** (*now open, development continues*)—Six blocks of street level retail surrounding the new Austin City Hall feature restaurants, coffee shops, boutiques, galleries and trendy furniture stores. Development continues as St. Bernard Sports, Taste: Select Wines, Malaga and other restaurants and shops continue to open their doors throughout the next few years. The district is also home to the Block 21 project, which is scheduled for completion in 2009 and includes a W Hotel, new *Austin City Limits* studio, a nightclub operated by Austin's own Willie Nelson, and additional street-level retail. Second Street between Colorado and San Antonio streets. [www.2ndstreetdistrict.com](http://www.2ndstreetdistrict.com)

**The Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art** (*Mari and James A. Michener Gallery Building, opened April 30, 2006; Edgar A. Smith Building, opening fall 2008*) – More than 17,000 works of art are part of the collection at the nation's largest university art museum. Located on campus at the University of Texas, it showcases American, contemporary Latin American and European art. The second phase of construction includes an auditorium, lecture hall, café, bookstore and outdoor gardens and plaza.

[www.blantonmuseum.org](http://www.blantonmuseum.org)

**Austin Music Hall** (*opened November 2007*) – Renovations to Austin's original music venue doubled its size. The new version of the old classic features an expanded mezzanine level, multiple full-service bars, an outdoor terrace, upgraded climate-control system, larger stage, new artist lounges, updated interior design and exclusive club and box seating. [www.austinmusichall.com](http://www.austinmusichall.com)

**The Domain and Domain Crossing** (*opened Spring 2007*)— Neiman Marcus and Macy's anchor an upscale shopping center in northwest Austin that also features 70 other restaurants and stores, including Tiffany's & Co, Barney's CO-OP and David Yurman. Plans also call for 75,000 square feet of office space, 400 high-end apartments and a Westin hotel. Mopac Boulevard between Braker Lane and Burnet Road. [www.simon.com](http://www.simon.com)

**Round Rock Premium Outlets** (*opened Summer 2006*) – The 120-outlet center in nearby Round Rock offers a mix of discount shops for apparel, shoes, fashion accessories, leather goods, home furnishings and gifts. The single-level outdoor village follows the architectural scheme of the Texas Hill Country. Featured shops include Harry & David, Burberry, Coach, the Disney Store, Puma, J. Crew and Michael Kors. [www.premiumoutlets.com/roundrock](http://www.premiumoutlets.com/roundrock)

## HOTELS/ LODGING

### NEW PROPERTIES

**21C Museum Hotel** (*construction begins Spring 2008*) – Scheduled to open in 2010, this project marks the second under the 21C brand. It will contain luxury condominiums, a high-end hotel, world-class art collection, open to the public year-round, upscale restaurant and artists' lofts. Plans call for the property

to reflect “Austin’s famously laid-back lifestyle through an extraordinary approach to art-inspired life and commerce.” [www.21cmuseumhotel.com](http://www.21cmuseumhotel.com)

**Hyatt Place Austin-Bergstrom International Airport** (*planned, opening date TBD*) – Global Hyatt Corp. has plans to build a Hyatt Place at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, at the intersection of Highway 71 and Thornberry Road. The new hotel is part of a 200-hotel project across the United States. The property aims to accommodate business travelers, with free Wi-Fi access, sleeper sofas, oversized desks, ergonomic chairs, flat-screen TVs and more. [www.hyatt.com](http://www.hyatt.com)

**Twelve Domain** (*construction begins Spring 2008*) – The Novare Group plans to build a 28-story condominium and hotel tower in North Austin as part of the massive Domain retail project. The tower will house 360 condominiums atop a Twelve Hotel, an Atlanta-based boutique hotel. Features of the Twelve brand include in-room computers that act as concierges, allowing guests to make dinner reservations, request valet or housekeeping services in addition to browsing the Internet.

**Executive Education and Conference Center at the University of Texas** (*scheduled for completion/opening August 2008*) – Plans for the newest meeting facility on the University of Texas campus include a 300-seat amphitheatre, 800-seat divisible ballroom, classrooms, conference rooms and breakout rooms. In addition, the center will house 297 guestrooms and three dining outlets. [www.meetatexas.com](http://www.meetatexas.com)

**Marriott Hotel Complex** (*construction starts early 2008; scheduled completion 2010*) – White Lodging is poised to start construction on two Marriott-branded hotels on Congress Avenue between Second and Third Streets. The \$185 million complex adds 1,000 rooms to the downtown hotel package. The 31-story, 850-room Marriott serves as a convention center hotel and the core of the complex. An 11-story, 150-room J.W. Marriott completes the project. Together, the hotels include 50,000 square feet of meeting space and two large ballrooms.

**The Seaholm Plaza Hotel** (*announced, scheduled completion early 2010*) – A large-scale redevelopment of Austin’s Seaholm Power Plant integrates the plant’s Art Deco façade into a new center for retail, restaurants, offices and meeting and event space. A 160-room upscale hotel with two restaurants, bar, pavilion and meeting space serves as the hub of the project. The complex will offer direct trolley service to the Austin Convention Center.

**Block 21/W Hotel** (*announced, scheduled completion 2009*) – W Hotel anchors this \$225 million project in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street district. The space will also include 200 luxury condominiums, a new Austin Children’s Museum facility, new studios for *Austin City Limits* and a nightclub co-owned by ACL’s pilot star, Willie Nelson. Shoppers can browse among 50,000 square feet of street-level retail as well. [www.stratusprop.com](http://www.stratusprop.com)

**Hotel Van Zandt** (*plans underway, construction delayed*) – Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants will manage Hotel Van Zandt, a 29-story boutique hotel at Red River and Davis streets. The hotel is slated to contain 55 luxury condominiums, 290 hotel guestrooms, a 100-seat restaurant and 12,000 square feet of meeting space including a 5,500-square foot ballroom. [www.hotelvanzandt.com](http://www.hotelvanzandt.com)

**Hotel St. Cecilia** (*announced, scheduled completion late 2008*) – Bunkhouse Management and Clayton, Levy & Little Architects are turning the former Miller-Crockett House into a boutique, 14-room hotel just off South Congress Avenue, in Austin’s hippest neighborhood. Named in honor of the patron saint of music, the hotel will offer private bungalows, a new pool and modern lounge. [www.bunkhousemgmt.com](http://www.bunkhousemgmt.com)

## RENOVATIONS/UPDATES

**Renaissance Austin Hotel** (*new construction and renovation underway, scheduled completion summer 2008*) – Upon completion of this renovation, the Renaissance Austin Hotel will be Austin’s largest in-house meeting facility. The property is adding 7,000 square feet of meeting space to its existing 60,000.

The new space will feature upscale contemporary design with soft lighting, fresh wildflowers, vaulted copper-tin ceilings, arched doors, large-scale windows, acoustical wood, and an overall neutral palette. The space is also engineered with high-tech audio-visual and lighting amenities. A recent multi-million dollar renovation was also completed in 2007, and included the construction of a new Internet café offering both wireless and direct internet connectivity, a new fitness center and lush bedding.

[www.renaissanceaustin.com](http://www.renaissanceaustin.com)

**Hyatt Regency Lady Bird Lake** (*renovation underway, scheduled for completion late 2008*) – The Hyatt's premier downtown property has revamped the lobby to expand public areas and include a coffee shop accessible from the hiking trail outside the hotel. Renovations continue throughout the year with changes to dining outlets, a new workout facility, refurbished patio area and improvements to the ballroom. [www.austin.hyatt.com](http://www.austin.hyatt.com)

**The Driskill Hotel and 1886 Café & Bakery** (*guestroom renovation scheduled May 2008-September 2008*) – Austin's historic grande dame has revamped its casual dining outlet, 1886 Café & Bakery. The new menu features bistro-style dining with specialty mojitos and margaritas, as well as local brews and refurbished furniture. In addition, the hotel is updating guestrooms with plasma TVs and upscale bath amenities. [www.driskillhotel.com](http://www.driskillhotel.com)

**Four Seasons Hotel Austin** (*renovation completed September 2007*) – The upscale hotel recently completed the construction of a new fitness center and spa with relaxation lounge, treatment rooms, nail salon and eucalyptus steam room. A new restaurant, TRIO, offers upscale steaks and seafood, along with a world-class wine list. Guest room renovations include the installation of plasma TVs, DVD players, wireless Internet and iPod docking stations. [www.fourseasons.com/austin/](http://www.fourseasons.com/austin/)

**Sheraton Austin Hotel** (*under renovation*) – Newly designed guestrooms now feature wireless internet, plasma screen TVs and new bedding. In phase two, a “Sheraton Link” café will offer Starbucks® coffee along with multiple laptop bays, high-speed internet and full service business center. The hotel also plans to landscape the outdoor terrace in the hotel's plaza overlooking the river. Guestrooms completed renovation September 2007; the next phase to update the lobby, terrace and meeting space starts in early 2008. [www.sheratonaustin.com](http://www.sheratonaustin.com)

**Hyatt Place – Austin North Central** (*now open*) - Formerly an AmeriSuites brand, the renovated hotel features 120 newly refurbished guestrooms and public areas. Guestrooms offer free wireless internet access, high-definition television and signature bedding. Other highlights include self-registration/check-in kiosk, “e-room” with internet, and complimentary shuttle service within a three-mile radius. <http://austinnorthcentral.place.hyatt.com/>

**Wyndham Garden Hotel** (*renovation completed Summer 2007*) – Guests now enjoy luxurious bedding, complimentary high-speed wireless internet, work areas and upscale guest bath amenities. The property features such amenities as a complimentary business center, more than 10,000 square feet of meeting space, on-site catering, an outdoor pool and whirlpool, restaurant and fitness center. [www.wyndham.com](http://www.wyndham.com)

## RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

There are currently more than 25 residential projects in varying stages of construction in Austin. Among them are:

**5 Fifty Five** (*now open*)—The residential floors of the Hilton Austin offer 99 units with a variety of one-, two- and three-bedroom designs ranging from 800 to more than 5,000 square feet, with prices starting around \$350,000 upwards to more than \$2 million. [www.5fiftyfive.com](http://www.5fiftyfive.com)

**Milago Condominiums** (*now open*) – This 13-story, 240-unit condominium complex overlooks Lady Bird Lake at the base of Rainey Street. The sold-out property includes a multi-level underground parking garage. [www.milagocondos.com](http://www.milagocondos.com)

**Red River Flats** (*under construction, scheduled for completion late 2007*) – Greystar Real Estate Partners, LLC is planning a four-story, 124-unit multi-family project on the site of the former Reddy Ice plant in the Red River Entertainment District. The property offers underground parking and an elevated pool overlooking Waller Creek. [www.urbanaustin.org](http://www.urbanaustin.org)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Street Retail District Residential Tower** (*now open*) – AMLI's first downtown high-rise will consist of 18 stories containing 231 residential units, street level retail and dining, and above-ground parking. Condo features include 10-foot ceilings, balconies, island kitchen, washer and dryer, and pre-wired internet access. [www.amlidowntown.com](http://www.amlidowntown.com)

**The Monarch** (*under construction, completion late 2007*) – The Monarch will be Austin's first rental high-rise at the epicenter of Austin's Market District overlooking Shoal Creek. 305 large residential units located on 29 stories will offer diverse layouts and luxury building amenities. The property will also incorporate 9,000 square feet of street level retail. [www.urbanaustin.org](http://www.urbanaustin.org)

**The Shore** (*under construction, completion January 2008*)—Trammell Crow's \$55 million development includes twin 22-story towers, one for 192 condominium units and a second to house the new Kimpton property, Hotel van Zandt. The properties are a hub of Austin's new waterfront district at Davis and Red River Streets. [www.trammellcrow.com](http://www.trammellcrow.com)

**721 Congress** (*under construction*) – The existing one-story building at Eighth and Congress, formerly Wild About Music, will be renovated into a six-story, mixed-use building. The property will house Veer 53 restaurant on the ground floor, offices on the second floor will house offices and 16 condos on the remaining top floors. [www.721congress.com](http://www.721congress.com)

**AquaTerra** (*under construction, completion TBD*) – South Austin's new property features 20 stories of luxury condominiums located on Barton Springs Road. Contractors constructed the tower according to Green Building Program standards; residents enjoy full-time concierge service, wireless internet, fitness facilities, a covered dog trail, and a green roof and pool. [www.liveaquaterra.com](http://www.liveaquaterra.com)

**Spring** (*under construction, completion early 2009*) – This project consists of a 36-story condominium tower in the southwest quadrant of downtown Austin and two blocks south of Whole Foods Market. Several levels of parking will be available above and below ground. Shops on the ground floor offer 20-foot-wide shaded sidewalks. Plans call for 220 units. [www.urbanaustin.org](http://www.urbanaustin.org)

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