Block group 8, containing the blocks bound closely around what is now 7th Street to the North, Waller Street to the East, 3rd Street to the South, and Sabine Street to the West, show a trend moving from heavy manufacturing, warehouses, and single-family residences to a source of residential radiance, predominantly consisting of multi-family apartment complexes and smaller offices, services, and retail commerce. Blocks 11, 15, and the Yard shared similar development patterns that differentiated from the development patterns shared between blocks 62 and 63. In 1885, this block group, which served as Austin’s access point to the railroad, was dominated by manufacturing and warehouses, exemplified by blocks 11, 15, and the Yard. While blocks 62 and 63 displayed some traces of manufacturing and services using water energy from Waller Creek, their territory was mostly populated by single-family residences. By 1935, while blocks 62 and 63 had already begun major shifts towards being dominated by retail, blocks 11, 15, and the Yard remained clustered with manufacturing and warehouses. Only by 2017 would the entire block group, with the exception of block 15, be entirely rid of its former manufacturing and warehouse presence, being occupied primarily by multi-family apartment complexes, offices, services, and retail.

In 1885, blocks 62 and 63 both contained buildings that utilized Waller Creek, such as block 63’s steam cleaning service and block 62’s corn mill. While block 63 had minimal development, block 62 had multiple single-family residences. Additionally, non-specialized
retail and service buildings lined the northeast corner of block 62 (although, some were left vacant) and a specialized cobbler service building sat at the southeast corner of block 63. Lastly, a wagoner’s house, wagon yard, and stable existed within the two blocks, identifying the location as a rest stop.

In the same time period, blocks 11 and 15, on the other side of East Avenue (which is now Interstate-35) both contained warehouses and dwellings, with most residences being single family. The yard had wholesale property and railroad system services, while block 15 consisted of more services and retail, such as saloons and a general store. Block 11 shows cotton, pecan, and gin warehouses.

In 1935, blocks 62 and 63 both experienced a similar shift in development patterns. Block 63 experienced a reduction in open space, resulting in the development of multiple single-family residences and retail shops. Likewise, block 62 experienced a similar shift. While multiple single-family residences already existed within the block, there was a significant increase in retail shops. Also, a fuel station replaced the stable located in the northeast corner of block 63. Services like the wagoners house, wagon yard, and cobbler shop and water-reliant operations like the corn mill and steam cleaning service disappeared.

Across East Avenue, block 15 saw its vacant areas being replaced with multiple single family residences and a church. Saloons and the general store were replaced by storage (canned meat) and warehouses. Block 11 saw an increase in stores and non-specialized services, such as a gas and auto-repair station. Grain, furniture, and hide warehouses concentrated on one side of the block, and single-family residences diminished. The yard maintained its railroad system and increased its industrial and manufacturing industry, specifically in metal. Specialized retail increased, with an oil depot. The yard went from 0 to 4 warehouses from 1885 to 1935.
Today, in 2017, blocks 62 and 63 again experienced a similar shift in development patterns. Retail shops disappeared and were replaced by offices and services. Additionally, single-family residences were removed from the two blocks, being replaced by a large, multi-family, apartment complex on the southwest corner of block 62. Now, a hotel stands at the southeast corner of block 62, reflecting a return to the lodging industry that existed on the block in 1885. Block 63 preserved its fueling station, now just a gas station, and experienced an increase in parking lots which replaced much of the land once occupied by retail shops and services. Lastly, block 62 has incorporated the Downtown Austin Community Court into its territory.

Today, nearly all of block 15 was taken over by a metal and iron recycling company. There are two single family residences located on the southwest end. This does not follow the general trend of the other blocks; as these became more developed, block 15 remained with similar characteristics from the past. The warehouses at block 11 have completely disappeared. Retail commerce has risen instead with a liquor and tobacco store and a record store. Non-specialized services have grown as well, particularly restaurants (Colombian and Mexican food). Part of the block now contains a music school as well. The yard experienced a dramatic change that resulted in a shift from a railroad, warehouse, and industrial dominated property to a construction zone that will soon be the “Plaza Santillo,” which will be a large apartment complex. Railroad tracks still exist on the southern end, but the specialized services that used to exist are now gone.

From 1885 to 2017, block group 8 shifted from land dominated by manufacturing, warehouses, and single-family residences to land that mostly contains multi-family residences, services, retail, and office buildings. While every block did not show identical trends, there were
similar patterns of development between block 62 and 63 on the west side of Interstate-35, and among the blocks 11, 15, and the Yard on the east side. Therefore, the shift among the blocks collectively reflects this shift from manufacturing, warehouses, and single-family residences to multi-family residences, services, retail, and office space.