REPORT TO:
THE AMERICAN CENTER FOR LAW AND JUSTICE ON THE SECONDARY IMPACTS OF SEX ORIENTED BUSINESSES

Produced by:
Peter R. Hecht, Ph.D.
ERG/Environmental Research Group
124 North Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
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OBJECTIVE

The object of this report is to review the current state of knowledge about the secondary impacts of sex oriented businesses upon its immediate neighborhood. This report deals with the secondary impacts upon nearby residential and commercial areas, as well as educational, recreational, and religious facilities with particular reference to what this means for smaller municipalities.

SUMMARY

Sex oriented businesses, although protected under First Amendment guarantees, can facilitate and support undesirable and detrimental patterns of activity in their vicinity. These secondary impacts are incompatible with activities and uses in residential areas, or near educational, recreational, and religious facilities. They also have negative impacts upon local businesses in their immediate neighborhood. When combined with additional sex oriented establishments or establishments serving alcoholic beverages, the evidence indicates that there are additional increases in undesirable and harmful patterns of activity.

It is important to point out that secondary impacts of sex oriented businesses is not a recent problem. Secondary activities associated with sex oriented businesses have historically included personal and property crimes as well as solicitation for prostitution, gambling, organized criminal activity, illicit drug transactions, shanghaiing/kidnaping, disorderly conduct, and other public nuisance activities. The work of many municipalities in examining the impact of sex oriented businesses buttresses the historic record providing ample evidence in support of regulation and restriction of the location and concentration of these types of business enterprises.

MAJOR POINTS

1. Sex oriented businesses provide a potential locus for illicit and undesirable activities by providing a place of contact for numerous potential customers for prostitution, pandering, and other activities.

2. In combination with on-site or nearby alcoholic beverage service or other sex oriented businesses, the concentration of uses increases the quantity of undesirable activities. There is a snowball effect of undesirable activities that feed upon and support each other.

3. There are a number of undesirable results of the facilitation effect upon illicit behavior. On the one hand, adjacent uses such as educational and religious institutions, or residential areas where there are numbers of children and youth are exposed to inappropriate models of behavior which they are unprepared to digest or respond effectively to. They are not old enough or mature enough to effectively decide what is appropriate behavior and these proximate uses create unhealthy influences. Where criminal activity is concerned children, the elderly, and women are especially prone to victimization in opportunistic personal crimes.

4. Sex oriented business by its very presence sets a context for interpreting pedestrians presence in the area as potentially related to the sex oriented business. This can and has led to propositioning of passersby who have no relation to the sex oriented business. Where vulnerable populations are involved, particularly children, women by themselves, the elderly, this unwanted attention makes it intimidating for them to be on the street.

5. There is going to be a strong tendency for inappropriate activities, to seek nearby venues. Prostitution and other illicit activities will find lightly used and under used nearby parks, parking lot, garages, alleyways, and other spaces for their activities. The sex oriented business(es) does not create the activity but provides a facilitating setting for supporting these activities. It provides a legitimizing reason for the presence of individuals who have illicit intent.

6. Sex oriented businesses have a negative impact upon both residential and commercial property values within three blocks of the location. The preponderance of research suggests that the presence of sex oriented businesses is considered by real estate appraisers and lenders to be evidence of community decline and decay. Other research indicates that areas with sex oriented businesses experience lower rates of appreciation in property values and/ or higher turnover in properties in comparison to comparable areas without sex oriented businesses.

Historic Overview

The issues of sex-oriented businesses and their effects is not something of recent vintage. Sex oriented businesses have an extensive history in the United States dating from at least the late eighteenth century [1]. The "tableau vivant" in theaters and the "concert saloon," appear as forerunners of what we know today by sobriquets such as "topless bar" or "go go bar" first appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century [1,pp.126-128]. Their forebears seem to have appeared for much the same reason that the New York City Department of City Planning identified for the recent boom in topless bars. It was a response to economic pressures that effectively brought in customers, mostly males in their twenties, to the taverns, restaurants, and theaters of the times [2,p.17].

The clientele has not changed very much over time. In the historic record, whether you look at boomtowns [3], cowtowns [4], frontier towns like Denver [5] and Salt Lake City [6], or seaports [7] the clientele has for the most part been young, single, transient/mobile males. That is still true today of the clientele for "topless bars" [2,p.18].

In the nineteenth century, activities we would currently classify under secondary impacts were overtly present within the establishments of the day. In a different social, political, and legal climate, many of the taverns, concert saloons, and dives had active gambling and crooked gaming activities ranging from keno tables [7,p.111] to bear and rat-baiting. Prostitution or sexual tease was always present. At the one end of the spectrum, "patrons in "Harry Hill's" were expected to buy overpriced drinks for the "waiter girls" or leave if they did not" [7,p.111]. "Obstreperous patrons were treated to knockout drops," [7,p.111] and probably robbed. At the other end, concert saloons often had waiter girls who were prostitutes; private rooms and balconies upstairs were used for prostitution [1,p.129]. Where theses activities did not relieve the customer, typically tourists, transients, sailors, or straying squares of their wallets, "crimps" specialized in drugging the unwary, robbing them of money, and then shanghaiing them onto boats, or just killing them [7,pp.107ff]. Arrangements were sometimes made with the police on a designated location to dump the unconscious victim where the police would pick them up in the morning and jail them for public intoxication.

In a legal climate that was far less regulated, and a political and social climate where these activities were condoned or not discussed, the problems were clearer and more closely tied to the sex oriented facilities. Today, where there is a much higher degree of regulation, illicit activity has moved out of the facilities into less regulated public locations. This has, in its own way, made the impacts upon the public of these establishments less clear but broader in scope than was the situation in earlier times.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Existing research strongly supports the existence of a relationship between the presence of one or more sex oriented businesses and elevated Part I and sex-related crime rates in the surrounding vicinity.

There are studies conducted in several cities that provide strong support for the observation that crime rates are significantly higher in areas with one or more sex oriented businesses than in comparable areas without these businesses within the same municipality. McCleary and Meeker's study in Garden Grove, California [8] and the Indianapolis study [9, pp.7-26] are two of the stronget studies.

McCleary and Meeker (1991) examined 10 years worth of crime statistics and reports for the main commercial street in Garden Grove, California. Using individual crime locations they examined the incidence of crime in relation to sex oriented businesses, taverns, and other locations along the boulevard. The seven sex oriented businesses along Garden Grove Boulevard accounted for 10.5 percent of Part I crimes and 25.5 percent of Part II crimes recorded for 610 addresses along the Boulevard that had crime reports during the 10 year period covered by the study. These figures have less than 1 chance in a 100 of happening at random [8,p.23]. Sex oriented businesses along Garden Grove Boulevard had more locations ranked among the top ten for crime reports than even the taverns along the same boulevard. The taverns that <u>were</u> ranked in the top ten for crimes happened to be located on the same blocks as sexually oriented businesses.

In addition, McCleary and Meeker conducted statistical analyses of crime rates before and after 5 changes to existing sex oriented business locations. This included expansion or opening of new sex oriented facilities in the immediate vicinity of an existing site, or the opening/closing of a tavern nearby [8,pp.26-28]. They compared crime rates around these locations to a composite index of crime rates at the other sex oriented business locations along Garden Grove Boulevard. Three of the instances involved additional sex oriented businesses and two involved sex oriented businesses and taverns. In the first three instances additional or expanded sex oriented businesses led to significantly increased property (e.g., burglary, theft, auto theft) and personal crimes (e.g., assault, robbery) within a 1000 foot radius of the sites. Except for one instance, and that only in relation to property crime, both personal and property crimes increased significantly within a 500 foot radius of the expanded or new sex oriented businesses.

In 2 other situations studied by McCleary and Meeks they looked at one situation where a tavern opened near the site of a sex oriented business and another where a tavern closed near the site of a sex oriented business. In the instance where a tavern opened near the site of a sex oriented business, personal crime rose significantly within a 1000 foot radius. Property crimes also rose, though not significantly [8,p.31]. In the second instance, a bar closed when it was located just over 1000 feet from a sex oriented business. No significant

change in personal or property crime rates was noted. The authors explain this as indicating that the interaction between taverns and sex oriented businesses does not hold beyond 1000 feet between the facilities [8,p.32].

The City of Indianapolis conducted comparisons between areas with one or more sex oriented businesses, with comparable control areas chosen on demographic characteristics, building types, and traffic levels [9,pp.7-26]. This effort at matching areas makes this study particularly important. The matched areas were compared for levels of recorded criminal activity for serious (Part 1) crimes and sex-related crimes. In the study areas with sex oriented businesses, the sex-related crime rate was 46.4 crimes per 10,000 population in comparison to 26.2 per 10,000 for control areas. This is 77% percent higher for study versus control areas [9,p.18]. If the ratio of sex-related crimes had followed the ratio of serious crimes (Part 1 crimes) for the study versus control areas the study area rate should only have been 23% higher or 32.3 per !0,000 population. A strong correlation was thus established between the presence of sex oriented enterprises and criminal activity, particularly sex related crime.

Other analyses done in Indianapolis pointed out crime related impacts of sex oriented businesses on residential neighborhoods. Sex-related crimes were found to occur 4 times more frequently in neighborhoods with a residential character and a sex oriented business than in district related commercial areas with a sex oriented business [9,p.23]. This dovetails with the trade area studies done in Austin, Texas [10,pp.27-31] and Bothell, Washington [11,p.5] that identified the majority of clients of the sex oriented businesses studied as coming from outside the immediate neighborhood. Sex oriented businesses thus help to create conditions that provide outsiders with reasons to be in a neighborhood increasing the potential for opportunistic crimes [12,p.21]. When semi-private locations, over which limited individual control can be exercised are also present, such as parking lots, parks, school yards, and playgrounds, the venues for opportunistic crimes are increased [12,p.23].

The Report of the Attorney General's Working Group on the Regulation of Sex oriented businesses (1989) for the state of Minnesota cites a number of supportive studies conducted in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. The 1980 study, by the Minneapolis Crime Prevention Center, examined sexually-oriented and alcohol-oriented adult entertainment businesses relation to several issues, including serious crime rates. Creating an index of burglary, robbery, rape, and assault (all Part 1 crimes) the 1980 study compared areas around sexually-oriented businesses to other areas in Minneapolis using simple and multiple regression statistical techniques. They found that the impact of sexually-oriented businesses on the crime rate index was positive and strong regardless of the control variables used in the regression equations, either singly or simultaneously. The report estimated, on the basis of the analyses, that the addition of one sexually-oriented business to a census tract area would produce an increase in the crime index rate of 9.15 crimes per thousand residents in the tract even if all other variables remained unchanged [13,p.7]. As for types

of Part II crimes, a 1987 study by the St. Paul Division of Planning reported that the police had determined that street prostitution in St. Paul clustered in an area adjacent to sexually-oriented businesses. Police statistics for 1986 indicated that 195, or 70% of prostitution arrests with identifiable locations were within this zone. All locations with ten or more arrests for street prostitution were in this zone. [13,p.11]

Another study cited by the Attorney General's report was one by the St. Paul Division of Planning and the Minnesota Crime Control Planning Board (1978). The study examined sexually-oriented and alcohol-oriented adult entertainment businesses and their relationship to rates of crimes per one thousand persons. Although this study lumped sexually-oriented and alcohol-oriented adult entertainment businesses togehter, it concluded that there were significantly greater numbers of crimes where there were 2 such businesses than where there was only one such business [13,p.8]. The New York City Department of Planning similarly comments that, "It is significant, however, that the concentration of sex-related businesses has been closely associated with substantial numbers of arrests within those establishments for prostitution and obscenity." [2, p.37]

Similar findings about multiple sexually-oriented businesses were found in Austin [10, pp. 9-24] through comparisons of Part 1 and sex-related crime rates in areas with several versus areas with only a single sex oriented business. The study areas with several sex oriented businesses had Part 1 crime rates 43 percent higher and sex-related crime rates that were 66 percent higher than those with only one sex oriented business [10, p.24]. Other comparisons between areas with sex oriented businesses and comparable control areas without such businesses found consistently that study areas had levels of Part 1 and sex related crime rates per 1000 population from 2 to 7 times higher than their respective control areas [10, p.23].

The City of Austin report also cites a 1977 study by the City of Los Angeles [10, pp. 38-39] comparing Hollywood, which had a very high concentration of sex oriented businesses, to the rest of the city of Los Angeles. From 1969 to 1975 the number of sex oriented businesses in Hollywood rose from 11 to 88. Part 1 crimes rose by 7.6 percent in Hollywood during the same period, compared to 4.2 percent for the citywide average. Personal Part 1 crimes, where the victim is confronted by the perpetrator, rose precipitously compared to city wide averages, 93.7 versus 25.6 percent for street robberies and 51.4 versus 36.8 percent for purse snatchings.

To summarize the research reviewed above it is fair to say that the similarity of findings from so many reports from different locations lends the aggregate weight of these reports to the conclusion that sex oriented businesses have a strong and positive relationship to increased crime and street crime in the areas in which they are located. The increases in Part 1 personal crimes (including assault and robbery) adds significantly to the negative impact these enterprises have upon neighborhoods and locations with particularly vulnerable populations, including the elderly, children, and women.

Existing research literature in the criminology, urban design, and environment and behavior fields provides supporting explanations for the findings described above and helps to understand their implications for neighborhoods. Fowler et al's [12] study of crime and prevention in a Hartford, CT neighborhood indicates that there is a class of spaces in neighborhoods that can be very attractive to criminal perpetrators under the appropriate conditions. Parking lots, open spaces between buildings, parks, and similar spaces display uncertain levels of ownership and control, or transient ownership. Sidewalks are an even more public area of uncertain ownership. It is often difficult to discern whether a person belongs or does not and the apparent right to question a person's presence is limited. (See Figures 1&2)

FIGURE 1. TRANSIT STOP AND ADJACENT PARKING ACROSS FROM THE REAR OF "THE CLUB" SITE
The presence of large, nearby parking areas that will be unused or only lightly used during the typical hours of operation for "The Club" provide a vast expanse of uncontrolled space that can facilitate illicit activity, cruising, and parking. The nearby presence of a bar adds additional facilities that can produce undesirable secondary effects.

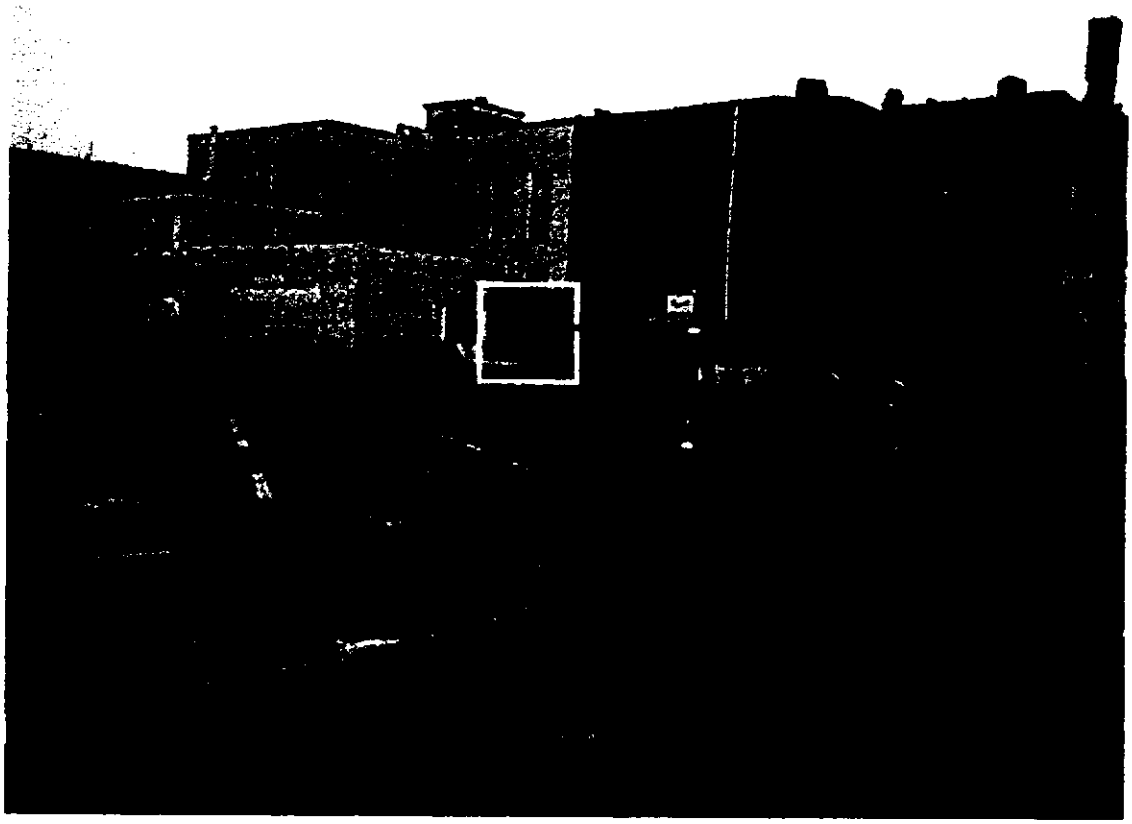


FIGURE 2. REAR ENTRY: "THE CLUB" SITE
The availability of a rear entry to the site of this sex oriented business is through a parking lot (a semi-private space) which provides convenient access to the bar nearby. The parking lot, with its many niches and hidden spaces, provides many locations that would facilitate illicit behavior to the detriment of nearby businesses, residences, churches, and community facilities. The proximity of a bar to a sex-oriented business is an additional factor that facilitates criminal activity.

Such public and semi-private spaces provide [14] places for all classes of people to gather. When there is a nucleus for illicit behavior nearby (e.g, a sex oriented business), there is a ready danger of such sites, innocent in themselves, being taken over and used for illicit purposes. When this occurs, legitimate users and neighborhood residents are typically excluded or driven away by the illicit activity.

Use of public spaces is tied to the typical level of activity in an area as well. It is said that nature abhors a vacuum. In a similar fashion it can be understood that spaces that are lightly used for legitimate purposes are open to use for less appropriate purposes. Interviews with perpetrators indicate that street crime is frequently a question of opportunity rather than deliberate planning [12,p.30]. Situations that provide legitimation for hanging out may significantly increase the probability of opportunistic street crime. Sex oriented enterprises frequently provide that legitimation for hanging out.

A related problem is the opaque face sex oriented businesses turn to the street. Blank building fronts do not provide connection between a facility and the street it fronts. The facility

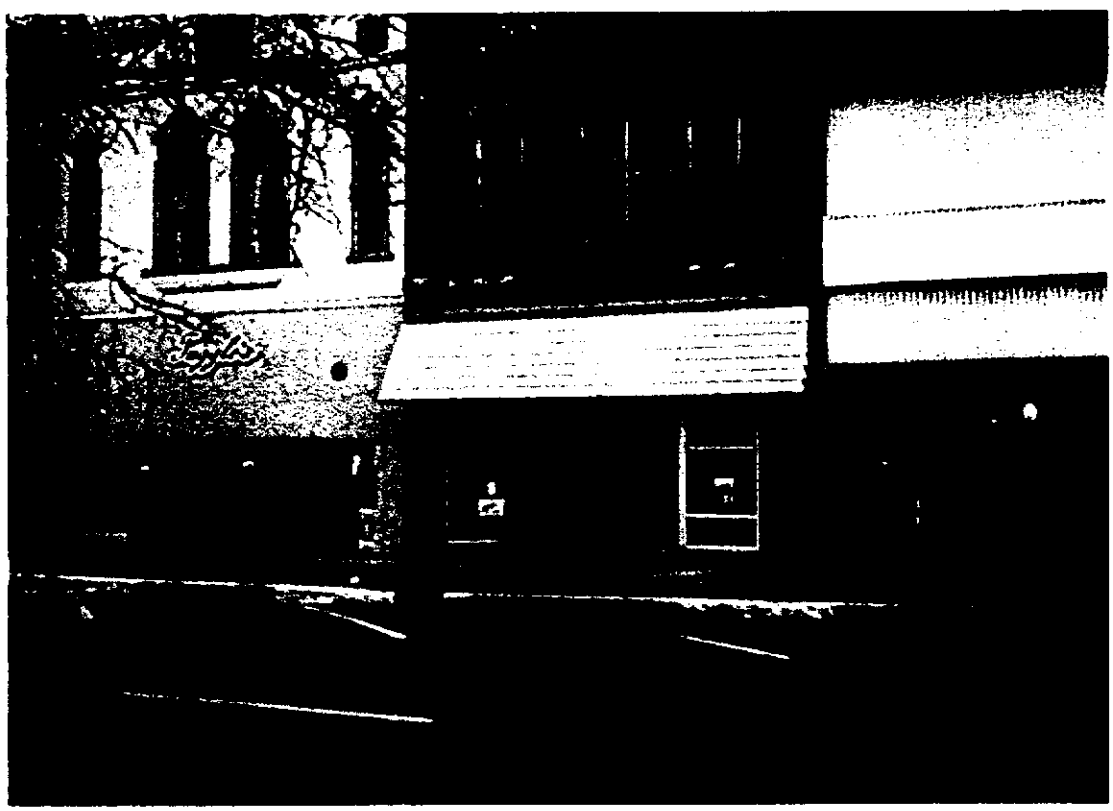
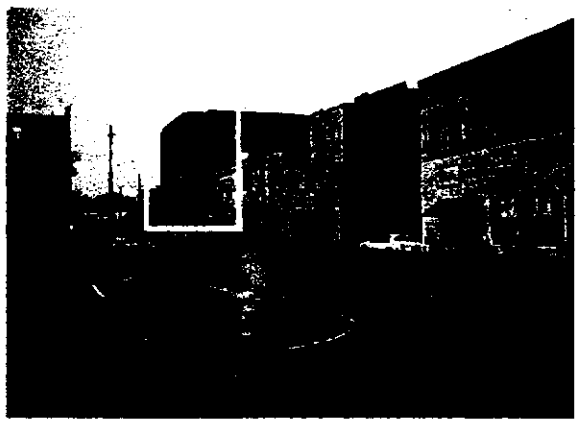


FIGURE 3. STREET FACADE: "THE CLUB" SITE
The recessed store fronts on either side of the site, as well as others on this and adjacent blocks, are available "semi-private" space over which no there is no control during the hours when the shops are closed. These are typical locations for potential loitering, solicitation, and other undesirable behavior during the evening hours when "The Club" would be operating. The screened facade of the "The Club" also removes any supervision of what goes on outside the facility by those inside.



FIGURES 4&5. NEARBY FACILITIES: "THE CLUB" SITE
Standing across the street from the rear of "The Club" site in either direction one sees residential or community facilities that will be affected by the secondary impacts of the operation of a sex oriented business within a 500-1000 foot radius of its site.

turns its face away from the street avoiding any supervision of the sidewalk immediately in front of it. This is frequently a problem with large modern buildings that have blank walls at the pedestrian level [14]. Sex oriented businesses also provide such an opaque facade because of the limited legitimate audience for their products or services (persons over 18 or 21 years of age). The result, as noted by the New York City Department of Planning [2, p.37] is that, ""As a result, and also because the sex-establishment patrons hurry in and out, the sidewalks are left unclaimed and thus available to those hustling and hanging out." New York State Urban Development Corporation, Vol. 1, August 1984." (See Figure 3.)

Women and the elderly show higher perceived fear than males and young adults in situations of unfamiliarity and also darkness [15]. Sex oriented business locations promote the presence of numbers of unfamiliar persons in that their trade area is not the local neighborhood. They typically operate primarily during the evening hours of darkness. Accompanied by other aversive activities in the vicinity of a sex oriented business, as depicted above, the area will soon be devoid of these vulnerable populations. Women are particularly sensitive to potential threats in public spaces. They will be the first to avoid locations that present a perceived threat to pedestrian safety. The gender and age mix found in public places has often been used as a good general measure of the relative safety of a public space [16,p.18]. Other types of businesses in the immediate vicinity will then be negatively impacted by the desire of patrons and potential patrons to avoid the area [17,pp.2-4].

Additionally, where the time frames of operation overlap between sex oriented businesses and other facilities (e.g., schools, churches, parks, playgrounds) there is even more potential for harm to legitimate users. Vulnerable populations that use these other facilities are exposed to the potential harm from the secondary effects of sex oriented businesses. This can take the form of personal or property crime, harassment or propositioning of pedestrians

[13,p.12], or exposure of minors to sexually explicit materials they are otherwise legally barred from obtaining on their own [13,p.12].

Harassment and propositioning of pedestrians in the vicinity can be seen as a direct outcome of the presence of sex oriented businesses. The presence and operation of a sex oriented business sets a context for interpreting behavior in the immediate area [18] in a frame defined by the most salient characteristic of the area. The sex oriented business is a highly visible element in its block because of its novelty and typically large signs [2,p.51;19,p.3] necessary to attract its regional clientele. This salience has a negative halo effect upon the area, defining the area and those within in it according to its most visible element, the sex oriented business. It is well documented that in interpreting the behavior of others we attribute their behavior to personal dispositions rather than to external influences [20]. Thus pedestrians, particularly women and especially younger women, walking in the vicinity of a sex oriented business may be perceived by other pedestrians in the area as being there for reasons related to the sex oriented business and approached or spoken to accordingly. The area in the vicinity of a sex oriented business thus becomes one women will not venture near to avoid being accosted. This is especially so in smaller cities and towns where they are more likely to be seen by persons who know them.

A related problem facilitated by the presence of the sex oriented businesses is the common focus for conversation among strangers it provides [14]. Whyte (1980) has described the impact of "triangulation" where the physical setting provides a salient event or object that creates a justification for strangers to speak to one another. Whyte uses the capture of a bank robbery suspect as an example of when unacquainted persons feel free to talk with one another in an anonymous public setting. However, to look at this phenomena from its less positive implications, a commercial sex business creates an atmosphere where opening discussions about sex with strangers is facilitated. The sex oriented business thus facilitates not only potentially harassing or intimidating situations for passersby but also provides the prop or support for those looking to make contacts for prostitution and solicitation among strangers.

The social and physical incivilities (e.g., harassment, propositioning, litter...) described above are well documented not only in their immediately intimidating aspects but also in their larger creation of a climate of fear in a neighborhood [21,p.294; 22; 23]. This may well have something to do with the impact of sex oriented businesses on property values and assessments documented in the next section of this report.

PROPERTY VALUES

A. ASSESSMENTS

Research indicates that the presence of sex oriented businesses is consistently and strongly associated with perceived decreases in value of both residential and commercial properties in the opinion of real estate appraisers and lenders.

There is a large body of work relating the presence of one or more sex oriented businesses to perceived reductions in the value of nearby residential and commercial properties. Appraisers and lenders in national and local surveys of consistently report negative impacts for sex oriented businesses on their immediate neighborhood.

The City of Indianapolis has conducted the most detailed and extensive work in this area. Most other studies They conducted both a 20% sample national survey of real estate appraisers and a 100% survey of appraisers in similar sized cities with a response rate of 33%. The majority of appraisers (75%) responded that an adult bookstore within 1 block of either a residential (80%) or commercial property (72%) would have a significant negative impact on the property's value. 59% estimated a loss of 1 to 20% of a residential property's value and 21% predicted a loss of over 20%. For commercial property 62% predicted a loss of 1 to 20% of a property's value with 10% predicted a loss of over 20%. No other type of facility, including a drug rehabilitation center had as significant a negative impact on estimated real estate values.

Similar results have been found in other studies. In Austin a questionnaire prepared by the Office of Land Development Services of the City of Austin was mailed to 120 local real estate appraisal and lending firms using a very similar questionnaire. The results from the 54 responses received were that 88% of respondents felt that an adult bookstore within one block would decrease residential property values, while 59% felt a negative, albeit reduced impact at 3 blocks distance. [10, pp.24-25] The margin of error for this survey is approximately plus or minus 14 percentage points. The reasons given by Austin respondents included:

1. These types of sex oriented businesses make homes less attractive to families thus lowering their value and demand for them.
2. Sex oriented businesses lead mortgage lenders to the conclusion that the neighborhood is in decline. This makes them unwilling to provide 95% financing for properties in these areas, again reducing demand and property values.

The Austin study also reviews a similar study by the City of Los Angeles. Similar results to the above mentioned studies were found with over 90 percent responding that concentration of adult businesses would make it more to rent or sell residential property within 1000 feet

of adult business enterprises [10,p.40]. A parallel survey of property owners within 500 feet of the Los Angeles study areas containing multiple adult businesses was conducted. Eighty-five percent of those responding indicated that adult businesses had a negative effect on the sales and profits of other businesses in the area [10,p.41]. Property owners also cited other negative impacts from the presence of adult businesses, including difficulty in recruiting employees and the deterrence of patronage by women and families [10,p.41]. Limitations on businesses evening hours of operation were also cited [10,p.41]. This clearly ties back into the issues of development of an intimidating atmosphere in the vicinity of a sex oriented business where significant portions of the community feel threatened just in passing through the area.

In 1986, Oklahoma City's Community Development Department [24,] conducted a similar survey of all real estate appraisers (N=100) listed in the local yellow pages. The survey had a 34% response rate (n=34) with 74% estimating some decrease in property values and 56% estimating a decrease of 10% or more for residential properties within one block. For commercial properties 76% estimated some decrease in property values and 47% estimating a decrease in value of 10% or more within one block. The proportions are similar to the studies cited above, although the small number of respondents increases the margin of error to more than plus or minus 20 percentage points.

The results of all studies reviewed find consistently that the vast majority of real estate professionals are of the opinion that the presence of sex oriented businesses decrease property values within a block of the business with the impact decreasing to none over 1000 feet from the sex oriented business.

B. Property Values

Research supports an association of the presence of sex oriented businesses with reduced property values in their vicinity.

The actual relationship between changes in property values and the presence of adult entertainment establishments has been shown to be a negative one in research in municipalities. The City of Indianapolis, Indiana compared changes in property values and activity in areas with sex oriented businesses, comparable areas, and the Township encompassing the city as a whole. Studying the years 1979 through 1982 it was found that areas with sex oriented businesses had slight increases in rates of turnover in property at a time when the control areas and the township as a whole showed strong decreases in real estate turnover. During the same period the study areas with sex oriented businesses showed smaller increases in property values in comparison to both control areas and the township as a whole.

Relationship of Businesses to their Local Neighborhood

Sex oriented businesses are not neighborhood facilities. Trade area studies indicate they are regional facilities attracting people from outside the neighborhood they are located in. This increases the porosity of the neighborhood to strangers and perpetrators, decreases informal social control of behavior, and increases the potential for opportunistic crime.

Two municipalities have conducted observations of customers' license plates to identify the origin of customers for sex oriented businesses. Studies conducted in Bothell, Washington [11, p.5] and Austin, Texas [10, p.31] examined the registration addresses of vehicles parked at selected sex oriented businesses in their municipalities. Out of 321 vehicles observed in Bothell only 8 (2.5%) were registered in Bothell. In Austin, of 81 vehicles observed at an Adult Bookstore, a Topless Bar, and an Adult Theater only 3 had addresses within a mile of the facility. Forty-four percent of the vehicles were registered outside the city. Supporting this are comments gathered by the New York City Planning Department from owners of sex oriented businesses. Their comments confirm the regional rather than local market of these facilities. The comments restate the importance of main arterials, parking, and access to public transit to the location of successful sex oriented businesses [2, p.26].

Thus sex oriented facilities bring persons from outside the immediate community into the neighborhood where they have no attachment for the area. Increases in the presence of nonresidents, in vehicular traffic, and parking in the neighborhood stress resident's ability to recognize other residents and challenge those who are there for illicit purposes [12, 25]. The regional customer base also means that the connection between the neighborhood and the sex oriented business is weaker and the owners are less likely to be responsive to neighborhood concerns or problems.

Implications for Small Towns

The presence of sex oriented businesses in small towns is likely to be magnified beyond that which would be expected in larger cities because of the more compact nature of downtowns and their relationship to surrounding neighborhoods. (See diagrammatic representation on page 17)

1. The smaller the commercial district the larger the impact of a sex oriented business is likely to be. The negative halo effect of such a business will affect a larger proportion of the towns business than it would in a larger city. Considering that many commercial districts may only be one or two blocks deep and six to 10 blocks long there is likely to be a strong negative impact on commercial activity in the town if people wish to avoid the sex oriented business.

2. Sex oriented businesses are regional businesses. Small towns do not have sufficient target populations to support these businesses as has been documented in trade area studies. Thus a sex oriented business in a small town will have the impact of drawing a regional population into its area of the town. This will be a largely adult, male population in

its twenties. It is an audience that has interests and activities that are at odds with those of families and the elderly.

3. Small towns are more likely to have fewer days and hours of commercial activity than larger cities. This makes it more likely that an operating sex oriented business will have a larger impact on the area it is situated in during off hours for businesses. Where semi-private, uncontrolled spaces are in the vicinity (i.e.., parking lots, parks, recessed storefronts, etc.), they are more likely to be available for inappropriate uses. Particularly in small towns, the likelihood of a cruising circuit for cars in the vicinity of the sex oriented business increases. This will bring additional noise, disruptive activity, and the likelihood of illicit activity into the area.

4. Small towns are currently more likely to be under economic stress than larger cities. This is frequently characterized by empty storefronts in the downtown. Where storefronts are empty in the location of sex oriented business, there is a greater likelihood of other sex oriented or alcohol oriented businesses locating there, further stressing the area businesses that are not sex oriented, and facilitating greater levels of illicit activity in the vicinity. Where downtowns are competing with regional mall shopping centers the presence of sex oriented business in the downtown will likely have an aggravated impact on downtown businesses in the vicinity.

5. The small size and lack of depth of small town commercial districts raises the probability of substantial impacts of sex oriented businesses upon residential areas of the town.

6. Smaller populations means, typically, that there will be gaps in the use of public and semi-private spaces, and larger periods of light use. This provides more locations for potential illicit activity when these spaces are within a five hundred to one thousand foot radius of a sex oriented business.

Rome, Georgia Illustrative Site Conditions

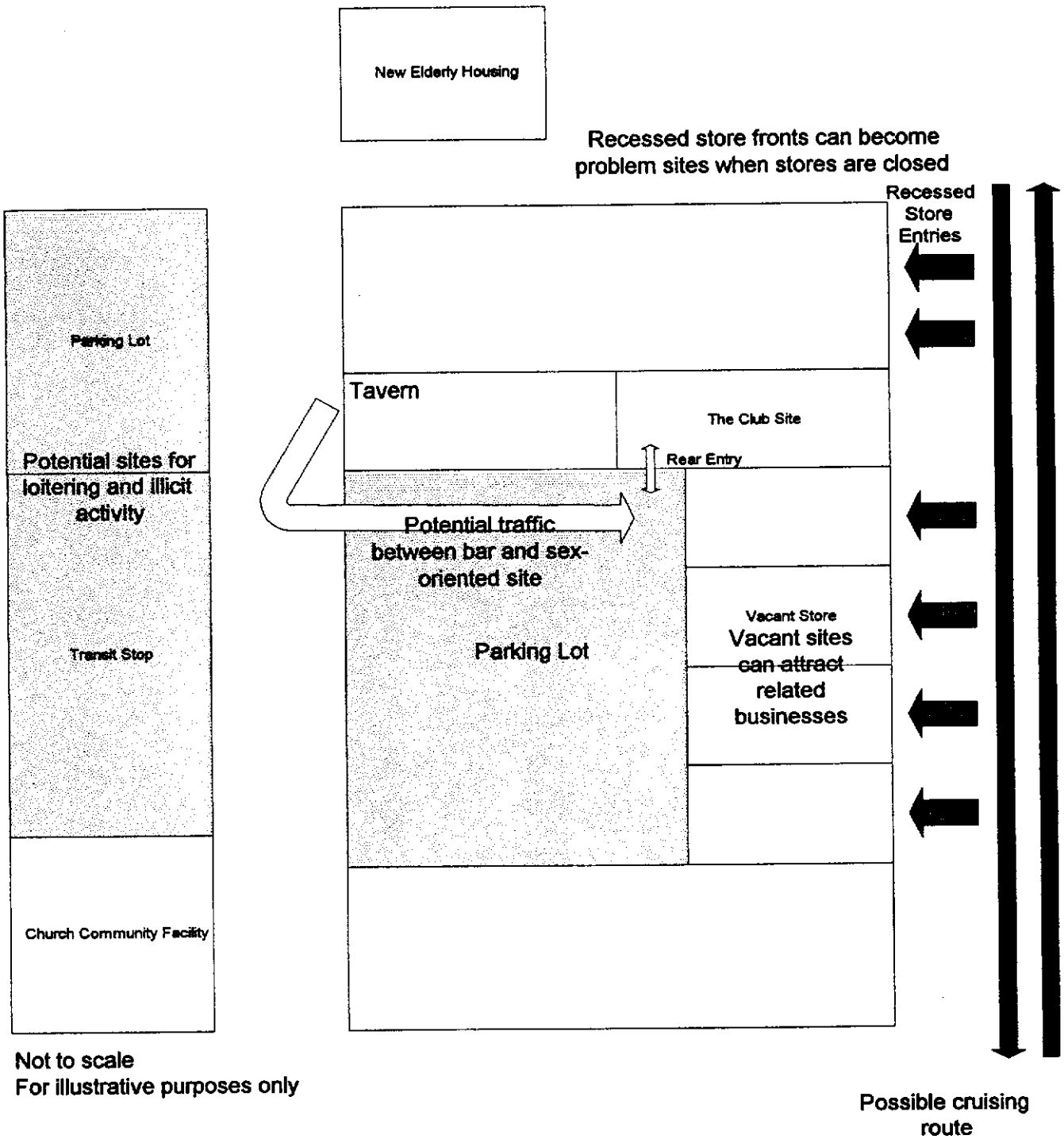


FIGURE 6. ILLUSTRATION OF POTENTIAL SECONDARY IMPACTS OF A SEX ORIENTED BUSINESS ON A SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET.

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