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What happened to State Street?

In the months following a global lockdown, protests of injustice brought the image of Chicago to change forever. Once a bustling town had gone to vacant streets and boarded up windows. Now, nearing the end of 2023, Chicago is closer than ever to being back to “normal”. Trains and buses are filled, and the streets are once again crowded. All has gone back to usual(?), all except for our beloved, State Street.

Before the pandemic, State was the place to go for tourists, and eager shoppers. Lights so bright, the nights felt like days. Each building served a purpose of stores, offices, apartments, and restaurants.

(QUOTE HERE)

Though that is still true today, State has transformed from a once glamorous street to vacant buildings and three-year-old wooden boards. Stores such as, DSW, Old Navy, Forever 21, Blick Art Materials have been replaced by another store or empty spaces with dirty windows.

Since the pandemic, State has seen a 30% vacancy rate (Chicago Sun-Times). The city is planning to reinvent the street from Ida B. Wells drive to Wacker drive. With sections for arts and entertainment, retail, and education. State street will hopefully see a new image coming soon.