

Downtown Lufkin Economic Development and Public Realm Vision

Public Meeting 2 Summary

Thursday, May 13, 2021 | 6pm – 7pm

Agenda:

- Introductions
- Project Overview
- Vision and Goals
- Concept Plan
- Next Steps

Participants (60 participants)

- **Client Team (3)**
 - Bob Samford
 - Anne Brookshire
 - Staci Hodges
- **Advisory Team (1)**
 - Tavo Valaquez
- **Consultant Team (3)**
 - Zakcq Lockrem, AICP, Principal in Charge
 - Brianna Frey, AICP, Project Manager
 - Jessica Williams, Deputy Project Manager
- **Members of the public (53)**

Introductions and Project Overview

The Consultant Team began Public Meeting 2 with introductions to the Project Team and Advisory Team. The Consultant Team also gave a project overview, discussing the project study area, goals, and engagement timeline.

Vision & Goals

The Consultant Team shared the project's vision statement and five (5) goals:

"Downtown Lufkin is a downtown for all, offering spaces that are welcoming, diverse, and family-friendly where locals and visitors gather to explore, dine, shop, relax, and learn". The five goals include:

- Downtown Lufkin must be **Dynamic**
- Downtown Lufkin must be **Lively**
- Downtown Lufkin must be **Magnetic**
- Downtown Lufkin must be **Inviting**
- Downtown Lufkin must be **Healthy**

Concept Plan

The Consultant Team shared recommendations for the concept plan and explained strategies for each recommendation. These include:

- 1. Increase Variety of Retailers and Restaurants**
 - 1.1 Attract new businesses to increase diversity of price and target audience
 - 1.2 Attract businesses that will connect Lufkin's natural amenities to Downtown
- 2. Attract Development and Investment in Downtown**
 - 2.1 Determine catalytic development sites
 - Evaluate the market for an Incubator/co-op space.
 - 2.2 Incentive rehabilitation of vacant/underutilized buildings and attract tenants
 - Evaluate the creation of a Historic District for Downtown
 - Revamp the Facade Improvement Program
 - Make changes to Mixed Use Zoning
 - Evaluate the creation of a Vacancy and Maintenance Ordinance
- 3. Parks and Open Space**
 - 3.1 Convert First Street from Shephard Ave to Frank Ave, and Lufkin Ave from First Street to Cotton Square, into a Festival Street
 - 3.2 Activate vacant lots and alleyways with temporary and permanent improvements
 - 3.3 Update City Ordinances to modernize Park uses regulations
 - 3.4 Enhance and Update the Historic Cotton Square
 - 3.5 Redesign Louis Bronaugh Park to host large 200 person events. In the short-term, update the existing canopy and the existing mural design.
- 4. Pedestrian & Bicycling**
 - 4.1 Create a Complete Streets network with a wider pedestrian zone, frontage zone, planting zone, bike lanes, and safe crosswalks
 - 4.2 Redesign Frank Avenue to enhance the pedestrian experience and slow traffic
- 5. Update Downtown Wayfinding**
 - 5.1 Improve Navigational Signage
 - Update Downtown's brand, slogan, and logo
 - Design and fund updated directional signage outside of downtown
 - Design and fund directional signage (pedestrian and automobile oriented) for Public Parking and cultural/historic assets
 - Design and fund "Public Parking" signs. Could be considered Public Art (Two lots: 203 S 1st St and 124 N Angelina St)
 - 5.2 Create strong gateways to the Downtown District
 - Design and fund gateway arches (South Timberland and S 1st Street; and East Lufkin Ave and Chestnut Street)
 - Create a Mural Gateway (Underpass of Frank Avenue and Angelina Street)
- 6. Create and Plan for More Regularly Occurring Events for All Ages and Abilities**
 - 6.1 Enhance existing Merchants Association
 - 6.2 Create Downtown Management District
 - 6.3 Create free events for families with children
 - 6.4 Create events catered to adults
 - 6.5 Create events that attract travelers and visitors

The Consultant Team also shared conceptual designs and discussed potential long-term improvements to Historic Cotton Square. These improvements included concepts for:

- A. Eat
- B. Gather
- C. Entertain
- D. Play



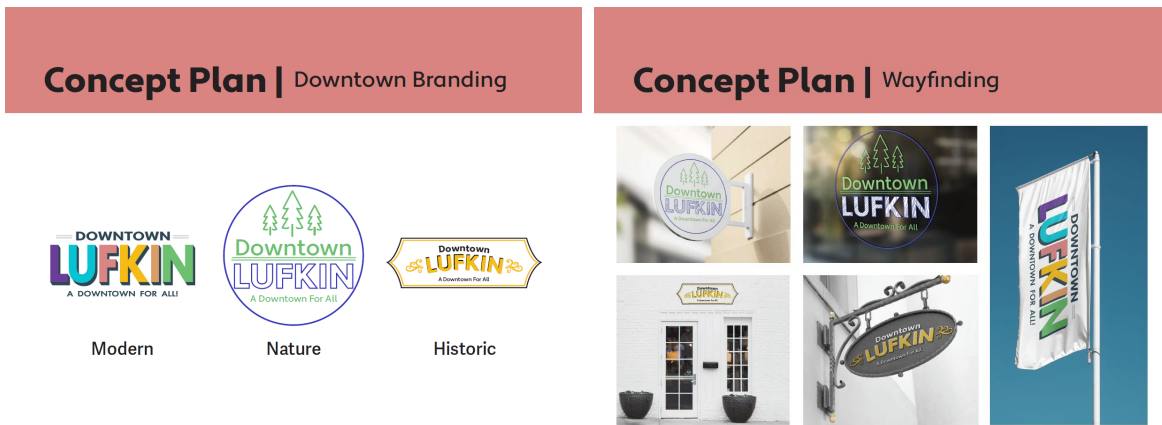
Participants voted on which long-term improvements they prefer. The poll yielded the following results:

- **Eat:** 6% (2 votes)
- **Gather:** 39% (14 votes)
- **Entertain:** 36% (13 votes)
- **Play:** 19% (7 votes)

Although "Gather" received 39% of votes, many participants commented that they would like to see a combination of different improvements. The Project Team received the following feedback on the long-term improvements they shared:

- “A combination of entertain and gather. Update the park area and have events and music”.
- “I like the idea of a combination of Gather and Play. The adults can hang out while the kids have something to do”.
- “If we follow the Cultural District ideas to covert Bronaugh Park to an outdoor music venue, I would do something completely different and unique here - like a water feature”.
- “We do a lot of outdoor events it would be nice to have a sitting area which is why I'm for [Gather] because finding somewhere to [sit] and eat or relax would be nice to have”.

The Project Team also led a discussion on potential concepts for downtown branding, including modern, nature, and historic brand elements.



Participants voted on the branding for downtown they prefer. The poll yielded the following results:

- **Modern:** 71% (22 votes)
- **Nature:** 10% (3 votes)
- **Historic:** 19% (6 votes)

Other general comments the Project Team heard includes comments on parking, alcohol use in public spaces, access to public restrooms, and preserving existing public art (ex. the Locked with Love Tree).

Next Steps

The Consultant Team concluded Public Meeting 2 by sharing next steps for the project. These include:

- Ways for the public to stay involved through the www.lufkinforward.com website
- Projects and Programs
 - May: Downtown Plan with implementation tactics
 - June: Presentation of Plan to 4-B Board and City Council