

LUFKIN

FORWARD

Executive Summary

Draft for review: July 2021



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The **Economic Development and Public Realm Vision** is the community's vision for the future of Downtown Lufkin. The Lufkin Economic Development Corporation together with the City of Lufkin have united behind the following objectives and strategies to achieve the following Vision and Goals for Downtown Lufkin:

“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.”

- Downtown Lufkin's Vision Statement

Downtown Lufkin must be...

HEALTHY

Downtown Lufkin must be...

INVITING

Downtown Lufkin must be...

MAGNETIC

Downtown Lufkin must be...

LIVELY

Downtown Lufkin must be...

DYNAMIC

The Vision Plan has identified a variety of projects, programs, and policies for the Lufkin Economic Development Corporation, City of Lufkin, and partner stakeholders to improve downtown infrastructure, beautification, and events.

The recommendations in the Economic Development and Public Realm Vision are organized into six overarching strategies, which are further detailed into eighteen (18) objectives:

- **Parks and Open Space:** Enhance public places for residents and visitors to gather and celebrate Lufkin, increasing the foot traffic of downtown businesses, and making Downtown Lufkin a place worth spending time in.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycling Experience:** Improve how people travel through downtown on foot, or wheels, and make the experience more enjoyable.
- **Downtown Wayfinding:** Promote downtown's assets through signage and gateways to connect users to all opportunities.
- **Events and Programming:** Ensure Downtown offers a variety of programming so that all visitors can spend time enjoying downtown, and ensure there are adequate resources to do so.
- **Variety of Businesses:** Diversify and strengthen the downtown business community, especially so that all visitors feel welcome and can find options they desire and can afford.
- **Development and Investment:** Create new tools for the City, LEDC, and their partners to enhance and attract development, and ensure there are adequate resources to do so.

The Vision's BIG IDEAS are:

Convert First Street, from Shephard Avenue to Frank Avenue, and Lufkin Avenue from First Street to Cotton Square, into a Festival Street.



Design, fund, and update Historic Cotton Square Park, such as public art, picnic tables, interactive play elements, and food trucks to Cotton Square Park.



Improve navigational signage, Downtown's gateways, and Downtown's branding.



Create a Downtown Management District to manage and program parks and public spaces, partner in event management, and provide maintenance services for downtown.

Lufkin's Downtown Management District can have a budget of about \$86,000 to \$388,000 if they elect to collect 10 - 40 cents per \$100 of appraisal value¹

¹ This may be missing some mixed use properties



Recommendations

The Vision Plan's full recommendations are summarized in the following recommendations axon. The full report details each strategies' recommended actions and responsible actors, supportive partners, phasing, and estimated project costs.

#1 Create dynamic parks and open spaces

1	Convert First Street, from Shephard Avenue to Frank Avenue, and Lufkin Avenue from First Street to Cotton Square, into a Festival Street.
2	Activate underutilized spaces with interactive art, furnishings, and/or dog park.
3	Design, fund, and install temporary improvements to activate this space, such as concrete painting, public art, tables or lounging, interactive play elements, or shade to Cotton Square Park.
4	Update Louis Bronaugh Park's existing mural and canopy. Redesign the park to host large 200 person events.

#2 Improve the pedestrian and bicycling experience in Downtown

5	Reduce existing drive lane width and introduce a median along the avenue to bring more green space for beautification and low impact development.
6	Rethink existing parking space in exchange for wider furnishing/planting zones, generous sidewalks, and bike lanes.

#3 Update Downtown wayfinding

7	Install gateways, including a mural at the underpass of Frank Avenue and Angelina Street, to the Downtown District.
8	Design and fund new navigational signage that are both pedestrian and automobile oriented.
9	Update existing street banners and navigational signage with the new Downtown logo.

#4 Create and plan for more regularly occurring events for all ages and abilities

10	Create events, including free events, that will attract both visitors and locals. Plan out an events calendar that is accessible by the public.
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#5 Increase variety of retailers and restaurants

11	Create a pop up shop program to activate vacant storefronts and lots and provide a low-cost entry for entrepreneurs and small businesses.
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#6 Attract development and invest in Downtown

12	Work with the City of Lufkin to develop partnership for purchase and management of catalytic redevelopment.
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- Key Destinations
- ↔ Median and Street Improvements
- ↔ Streetscape Improvements
- Festival Streets
- Cotton Square Improvements
- 👤 Vacant Lot Activation
- 📍 Proposed Navigational Signage



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