

**Comprehensive Plan 2001**

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**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION  
GUIDELINES**

## INTRODUCTION

Lufkin's downtown area has served as the core of the City since its incorporation in 1890. Over a century has passed, however, and many changes have occurred that have affected the atmosphere within downtown. Similar to many other Texas cities, Lufkin's downtown has been adversely affected by the suburban growth and urban sprawl of the past few decades. During the same time period, the retailing and vibrant business community that once called Downtown Lufkin home often chose to locate along the more traveled routes within the City. However, in recent years, Downtown Lufkin is experiencing a re-birth. It is slowly but surely becoming increasingly vibrant, with new restaurants, shops and offices, and with new reasons for people to come to Downtown to shop, to eat, to stay awhile. The purpose of this section of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that this trend of revitalization in Downtown Lufkin continues in a positive manner. The guidelines set forth herein have been established to further this purpose



ILLUSTRATION 10-2  
Downtown Lufkin Today

and to provide a cohesive sense of how Downtown Lufkin can again become the heart of the City.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES ESTABLISHED FOR DOWNTOWN

During the issue identification phase of the planning process, Downtown Lufkin was recognized as an area in need of specific attention. The subsequent written set of Goals & Objectives contains the statements of intent related to Downtown that are outlined in **Table 10-1**.

Key words or phrases that are used within these statements include *commerce, heritage, character, social interaction, enhancements, and public/private investment*. Several of the objectives outlined must be met on a continual basis (i.e., cooperation between public and private entities), and others are being addressed by the Main Street



Source: City of Lufkin Website, related text written by Bob Bowman.

ILLUSTRATION 10-1  
Downtown Lufkin (Circa 1925)

Program and the related Main Street Advisory Board. The guidelines within this section are intended to provide

additional ways in which Lufkin can achieve these goals and objectives.

**Table 10-1:  
GOALS & OBJECTIVES RELATED TO DOWNTOWN LUFKIN**

<p><b>Goal 5:</b> Continue to implement proactive planning efforts for the redevelopment of the City’s central business district (downtown area) in order to maintain the area’s heritage and character, enhance downtown as the “heart” of the City and increase community pride, while creating an environment that is also conducive to revitalization.</p>	<p><b>Objective 5.01:</b> Encourage public and private reinvestment within the downtown area to help ensure its long-term economic viability, to preserve its heritage and “central city” character, and to increase its use as a “people” place for social interaction and commerce (i.e., a pleasant location to shop, eat, conduct business, relax, be entertained, etc.).</p> <p><b>Objective 5.02:</b> Continue efforts to encourage renovation and adaptive reuse of historic and other significant structures.</p> <p><b>Objective 5.03:</b> Consider development/ strengthening of special guidelines for the downtown area that address historic preservation and other downtown issues such as streetscape enhancements (e.g., landscaping and other amenities), making downtown more attractive for commerce, and helping to ensure architectural compatibility among downtown buildings.</p> <p><b>Objective 5.04:</b> Coordinate downtown enhancement and preservation efforts with merchants’ and property owners’ association(s).</p> <p><b>Objective 5.05:</b> Explore creative initiatives within the downtown area such as formation of a public/private partnership to handle ideas and issues, creation of a “walking museum” environment, development of incentives for street vending and reuse of vacant structures, and enhancement of open areas for public assemblies and functions.</p>
<p><b>Goal 15:</b> Promote a more livable community and high quality of life through good urban design practices and through a proactive approach to the visual image of the community. Reinforce the City’s image and identity as a community of excellence through urban design, and through increased public awareness and involvement.</p>	<p><b>Objective 15.08:</b> Reinforce the existing downtown areas as a central focal point and activity center for the community, thereby increasing opportunities for social interaction among residents, commerce and tourism. Lufkin’s downtown area should serve as a central place to shop, eat, conduct business, relax, or be entertained.</p>

Source: Goals & Objectives Section of the Lufkin Comprehensive Plan 2001

## RECENT DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

The Main Street Department has been proactive in trying to achieve incremental improvements in the downtown area. Following are descriptions of some of these improvements.

### Downtown Murals<sup>10-1</sup>

Started in the early 1990's, what has become known as *the mural project* has had a profound visual impact on the atmosphere of Lufkin's downtown area. The first mural of Cotton Square Park and related activities was commissioned in 1990 and was completed in 1991. Five murals have now been completed, all of which depict historical images of Angelina County and Lufkin associated with the area's growth. These images include representations of significant businesses that made, and in some case continue to make, significant economic contributions to the City, including the Brookshire Brothers Corporation, Lufkin-Conroe Communications, and the Angelina and Neches River Railroad. **Illustrations 10-3 through 10-7** are pictures of the murals as they are seen on the walls of Downtown buildings. These murals are a representation of Lufkin's commitment to Downtown revitalization.

<sup>10-1</sup> Information obtained from the City of Lufkin Website, specifically [www.ci.lufkin.tx.us](http://www.ci.lufkin.tx.us), from the Main Street Program link. Source for Illustration 10-3 through 10-7: City of Lufkin Murals painted by: Lance Hunter



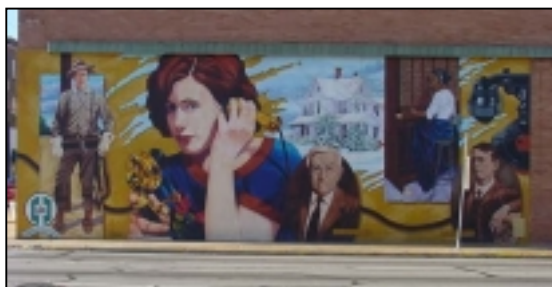
**ILLUSTRATION 10-3**  
The Cotton Square Park Mural (Completed In 1991)



**ILLUSTRATION 10-4**  
The Looking Back Mural (Completed In 1996)



**ILLUSTRATION 10-5**  
The Brookshire Mural (Completed In 1997)



**ILLUSTRATION 10-6**  
The LCC Mural (Completed In 1999)



**ILLUSTRATION 10-7**  
The A&NR Railroad Mural (Completed In 2000)

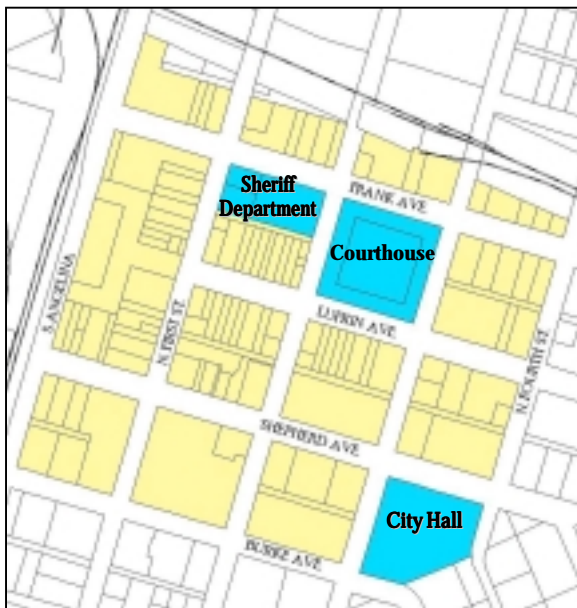
## TEA-21 Grant

The facilitators of the Lufkin Main Street Program recently applied for and received grant funds through the federal *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century*, an act commonly known as TEA-21. A total of \$2.2 million has been allocated to fund improvements in the downtown area specifically for the area shown by **Illustration 10-8**. These improvements will include<sup>10-2</sup> roadway improvements, curb & gutter replacement, sidewalk replacement, landscaping, street lighting, and ensuring ADA compliance. Pedestrian access is one of the elements within the downtown area that is being focused upon. This was a significant factor in obtaining the TEA-21 grant

money. These Downtown improvements will lay the foundation for continuing revitalization efforts.

## ACHIEVING A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN LUFKIN

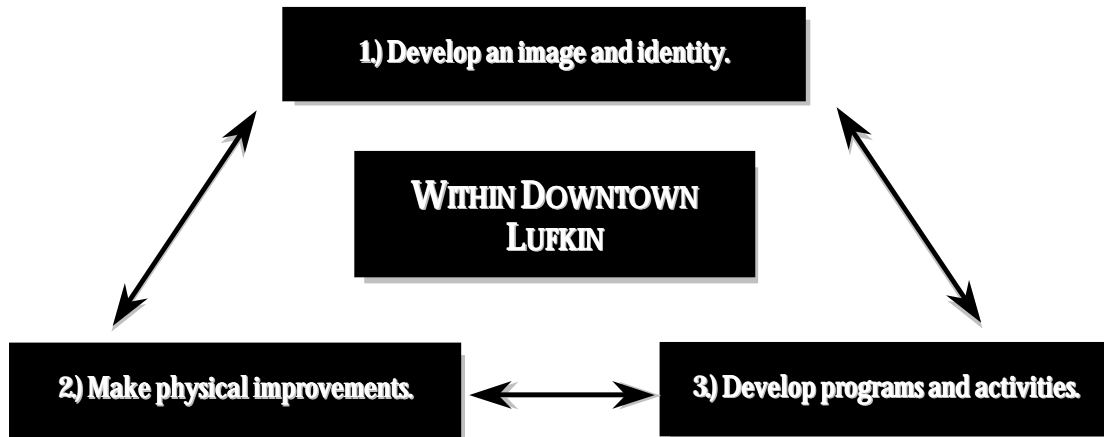
What are the key factors in achieving an economically viable downtown in the new millennium? What can be done to make a downtown area, initially designed for business and social interaction in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, conducive to business and social interaction in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century? Although it will be the reaction of the private sector that will ultimately make economic viability occur, the public sector (the City of Lufkin) can continue to implement programs and make necessary improvements to help ensure a positive reaction from the private sector. A three-phase, on-going approach will be required by the City to recreate Downtown Lufkin as an economic and social force within the community, and to help it become a place for significant tourism. This three-phase approach is described in **Illustration 10-9**. Most activities and efforts can be categorized in one of these phases.



**Illustration 10-8**  
Project Area for TEA-21 Grant Funds

The overall goal of this approach is to bring people into Downtown Lufkin; attracting people into Downtown is the precursor to an active Downtown, wherein people can shop, eat, and relax. This will make the area economically

<sup>10-2</sup> Specified improvements may not all occur throughout the area identified.



**Illustration 10-9**  
**Approach to Achieving a Vision for Downtown Lufkin**

viable, and therefore will increase its significance within the community. Recommendations made herein relate to this three-phase approach and will further the City’s efforts for the revitalization of Downtown Lufkin.

### Developing an Image and Identity

Lufkin has already begun to recognize the importance of these three phases. First, an image and identity for the downtown area has begun to take shape with the mural project (previously described) and with some of the new businesses and restaurants. It is important that appropriate businesses, specifically those that make a positive contribution visually and economically, locate within Downtown Lufkin. Retailing establishments, that is places at which to shop and eat, will be extremely important in making the downtown area vibrant and active, and should be targeted for location Downtown.

### Making Physical Improvements

Second, some of the necessary physical improvements, as previously mentioned, have begun with funding from the TEA-21 grant. These improvements will be significant to the overall downtown area, but they should be considered the first in a series of physical improvements. Additional funding will have to be secured in future years to complete



**Illustration 10-10**  
**Banner Sign In Downtown Lufkin**

other improvements (i.e., additional landscaping, burial of utility lines, etc.) and to ensure the on-going maintenance of such improvements. A consistent, long-term commitment to making physical improvements within Downtown Lufkin will eventually have a cumulative effect on the overall environment.

## Developing Programs & Activities

Third, developing programs and events within the downtown area is perhaps the most significant way in which the City can begin to entice people to come to Downtown Lufkin. A series of annual programs have been established through the Main Street Program that are designed to do just that, including *Entertainment in the Park Days*, the *Downtown Hoedown*, and the *Annual Downtown Christmas Parade*, to name a few. The City should continue to sponsor these types of programs. The public's overall perception of Downtown as a place for social interaction and tourism will be strengthened with increased involvement in sponsored events, which provide reasons for the public to experience Downtown Lufkin.

## GUIDELINES FOR DOWNTOWN LUFKIN

The guidelines outlined herein are intended to provide recognized ways in which the City can eventually obtain a dense, small-scale urban environment. Further, they are intended to encourage Downtown buildings to maintain an intimacy with pedestrians, yet be flexible enough to allow each use to create its own identity. As previously mentioned, land uses within Downtown Lufkin should continue to be oriented toward retail, restaurant and entertainment type uses. Some offices are also encouraged, especially on upper floors (i.e., not at ground level where retail/entertainment uses should predominate). Residential uses should also be encouraged as part of the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, especially on upper floors.

## A Concentrated Downtown Area Identified

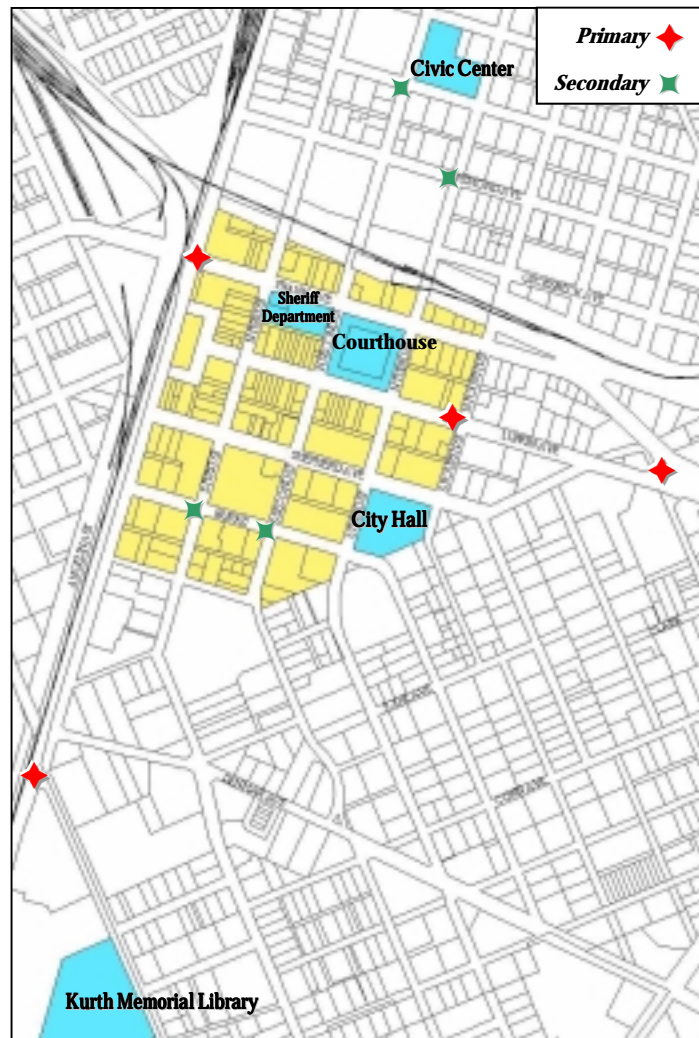
The Main Street District, identified through the Lufkin Main Street Program, is a much larger area than is intended for these recommendations. Concentrating on a smaller area, for the purposes of this Downtown Revitalization Plan, will enable Lufkin to streamline revitalization efforts; therefore, a greater difference can be made within a shorter length of time. The guidelines and recommendations

contained herein will be consistent with the area shown within **Illustration 10-8**; this is part of the project area within which the TEA-21 grant funds will be spent. This area has been identified as the core of Downtown Lufkin, and should be the principal area within which these guidelines are followed. The area includes Lufkin City Hall and the County Courthouse, and is bounded by South Angelina Avenue to the west, North Fourth Street to the east, Frank Avenue to the north, and Burke Avenue to the south. The area should be expanded at a later point, once progress has been made within this core area.

structures, as well as to existing properties that are not currently consistent with the design objectives for the downtown area. There are already many positive changes that have taken place within Downtown Lufkin in recent years; these guidelines are intended to expand on this positive trend. To help further create and enhance the favorable Downtown environment, the City should focus upon the following key elements:

### Downtown Enhancement Elements

It is often difficult to identify exactly which specific elements contribute to a positive environment; this is primarily due to the fact that the creation of such an environment is generally the result of the cumulative effect of numerous positive elements. The guidelines concentrate on strengthening and improving Downtown Lufkin's image and identity so that this cumulative effect will be the result, thereby making the area a desirable place for commerce and tourism. Implementing some of the suggested guidelines will take City initiative (i.e., constructing gateway treatments). Others will apply to new and renovated



**Illustration 10-11**  
Recommended Primary and Secondary Gateway Locations

- ◆ Gateway treatments;
- ◆ Special signage;
- ◆ Streetscape elements;
- ◆ Pedestrian elements;
- ◆ Architectural guidelines;
- ◆ Maintenance challenges;
- ◆ Parking challenges; and,
- ◆ The new transit center.

As **Illustration 10-12** shows, a gateway treatment may be as simple as carefully sculpted landscape features with special signage (i.e., using a Downtown Lufkin logo) or as elaborate as a water feature. Other elements may include lighting, fencing, or art/sculptural elements.

### SPECIAL SIGNAGE

Signs perform many functions and come in many different forms – directional, locational, and informational (i.e., announcing special events), to name a few. The City can use all types of signs in

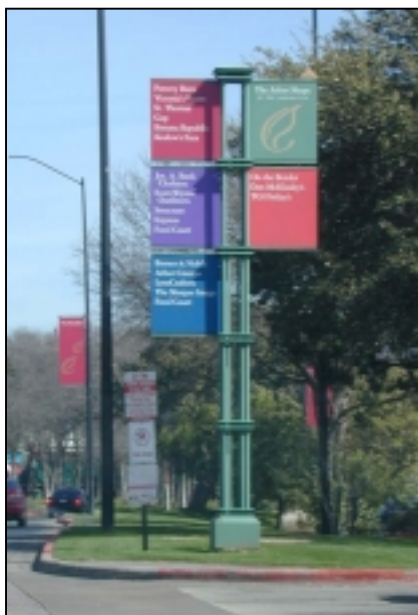
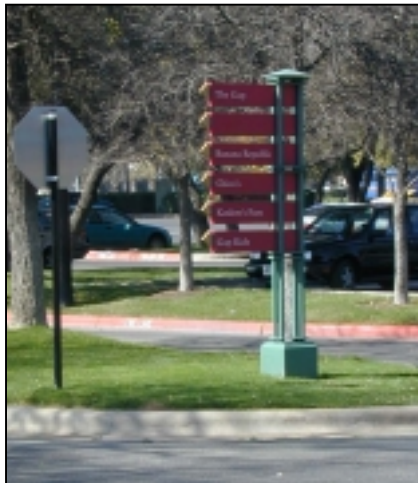
### GATEWAY TREATMENTS

Modern society is extremely dependent on the automobile; because of this, people often receive their first impression and initial knowledge of a place from the roadway. Gateway treatments are effective in conveying messages to people passing by. Well designed, visible gateways placed at strategic locations surrounding Downtown Lufkin would provide citizens and visitors with a visual image of the geographic location that is Downtown. The purpose is to announce and acknowledge the downtown area as a special place within Lufkin.

*It is recommended that the City establish gateways at the locations shown on Illustration 10-11.* Further, there should be a hierarchical distinction between primary and secondary gateways. Primary gateway treatments should be placed along major roadways with large traffic volumes; secondary gateway treatments should be placed along other roadways that bound the downtown area that do not support as much traffic volume.



**ILLUSTRATION 10-12**  
Examples of Gateway Treatments



**Illustration 10-13**  
Examples of Unique Street Signage

a cohesive manner to help give Downtown Lufkin a special identity. Lufkin's Main Street Program has facilitated this by placing banner signs throughout the downtown area (refer to **Illustration 10-10**). These inform people of events that are occurring within Downtown. The City should continue to use banner signs in this manner. Street signs can also be designed in a way that helps to define a particular area. Similar

to the design of gateway treatments, there are many ways to uniquely design these signs. It could be as simple as incorporating the City of Lufkin logo on an otherwise standard street sign. Likewise, they could be designed in a more distinctive way, possibly reminiscent of the old Downtown Lufkin or of a village-type atmosphere (similar to **Illustration 10-13**). Regardless of the type of design that is ultimately chosen, the key is to set Downtown Lufkin apart from the surrounding City in this simple yet effective way.



**Illustration 10-14**  
Existing Attached Signs in Downtown Lufkin

The City should also establish some requirements for the type of signs that are allowed to be placed on Downtown buildings (i.e., directly attached to the building, on an awning, etc.). Several positive examples of aesthetically pleasing signs are currently in use, as **Illustration 10-14** shows. Lufkin should ensure the continuation of this trend by establishing certain requirements, possibly including material, color, size, and locational criteria.



**Illustration 10-17**  
Example of a Well Landscaped Area Providing Shade

Another type of sign that would likely have a positive impact on the downtown area is the directional sign. These are especially helpful within tourist areas, and as Downtown Lufkin further develops into a tourist attraction, the need for signs informing tourists of locations of attractions (i.e., the location of the Civic Center, the Museum of East Texas, the transit center, etc.) will become increasingly important. Directional signs should be designed in a manner



**Illustration 10-15**  
Example of Street Trees

consistent with the design of street signs and gateway treatments, to help further create a cohesive atmosphere within the downtown area.

### STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

The term *streetscape* can be described as the aesthetic value of the view along a street. Positive or negative, numerous elements contribute to this view, including landscaping, street trees, and street hardware (e.g., lighting, stop lights, etc.). The incorporation of aesthetically pleasing streetscape elements within Downtown Lufkin can not only help to provide the City with a downtown area that has a pleasing *view from the road*, but will also help to make the area more conducive to pedestrian activity. The following improvements are recommended for consideration within Downtown Lufkin.



**Illustration 10-16**  
Existing Landscaping Elements in Downtown Lufkin

## Landscaping Elements and Street Trees

The integration of natural elements has generally been the ideal within the dense urban settings society has created. However, the *successful* integration of such elements often eludes cities because of the way in which the landscaping is installed. The key is to make landscaping elements a part of the overall streetscape through consistency and maintenance. Lufkin has previously recognized the importance of landscaping, as **Illustration 10-16** shows. Landscaping elements are also going to be included in the improvement plan for Downtown that has been funded by the previously mentioned TEA-21 grant. The City should continue this practice, and should consider the use of tree grates and large planters in the future. Tree grates have been proven to provide planted trees with a longer life-span, especially in the Texas climate where they require an increased amount of water. The shading trees provide is significant to an area like Downtown Lufkin where pedestrian activity is encouraged, particularly when they are planted so that they provide consistent shade.

## Street Hardware

Light fixtures within a room can create a distinct atmosphere. Likewise, light fixtures along a street can create an ambiance when special attention is given to their design and aesthetic appeal. *It is recommended that the City decide the type of atmosphere it desires within the downtown area, and follow through with that concept through distinctive lighting.* There are numerous choices for street lights and stop lights. The City could review old pictures of Downtown (circa the late 1800s), and attempt to replicate the type of lighting that was prevalent during Downtown Lufkin's early years.



**Illustration 10-18**  
Example of a Unique Light Fixture

## Utility Lines

Utility lines are a basic necessity for all urbanized areas. However, they often tend to clutter the overall visual image. The way in which Lufkin's downtown area looks and feels would be greatly enhanced by mitigating the visual affects of overhead utility lines. Burying and relocating these lines can be an expensive proposition. The City has the opportunity to do this while the improvements from the TEA-21 grant are being constructed (i.e., while Downtown roadways and sidewalks are being removed), thereby slightly reducing the cost of relocating the lines. *It is recommended that the City pursue burying these utility lines where possible on at least one or two of the blocks (as budgeting allows) that are in the heart of Downtown*, such as the two blocks bordered by First Street, Lufkin Avenue, Third Street, and Shepard Avenue. On other downtown blocks, relocating overhead utility lines to a location behind buildings would help to maintain the visual quality of store

and office fronts. The City should investigate the cost differential between burial and/or relocation while the TEA-21 project improvements are being made, and should make burial or relocation of utility lines part of the improvements occurring now.

## PEDESTRIAN ELEMENTS

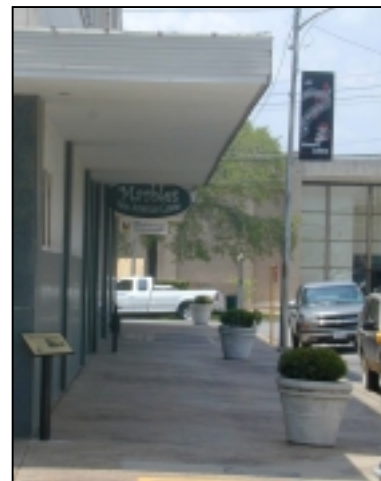
In order to create a more walkable downtown area in Lufkin, there must be elements in Downtown that make it conducive to pedestrian activity. The following is a discussion of recommended elements.

### Sidewalks/Walkways

Perhaps the most basic element necessary for a pedestrian environment, sidewalks allow people to move freely. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, downtown



**Illustration 10-19**  
An Example of a Downtown Area Without Visible Utility Lines



**Illustration 10-20**  
An Existing Wide Sidewalk in Downtown Lufkin

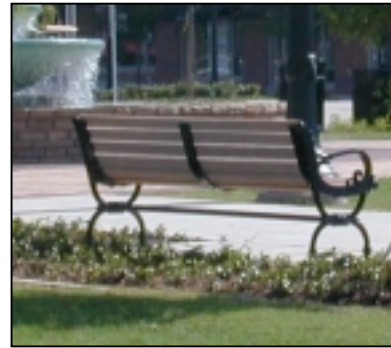
areas were truly the center of commerce for Texas towns, and walkways allowed people to safely distance themselves from the street (often an unpaved, cleared area) to shop for goods and services. These walkways were also often covered with awnings or overhangs to provide protection from the Texas sun. Wide, expansive walkways (now paved sidewalks) remain in Downtown Lufkin today, which is an advantage for the City. Unlike many communities trying to create pedestrian activity in a certain area, there is no need to retrofit the downtown area in Lufkin with sidewalks. However, many of the existing sidewalks should be reconstructed and brought into compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act*(ADA).

As previously discussed, the addition of more large trees in tree grates and landscaping within these walkway areas would help to further create a pedestrian environment. Further, the incorporation of awnings and wide



**Illustration 10-21**  
A Walkway Helps Create a Positive Visual Image

overhangs on building facades within Downtown would provide shade for pedestrians, as they did in the past.

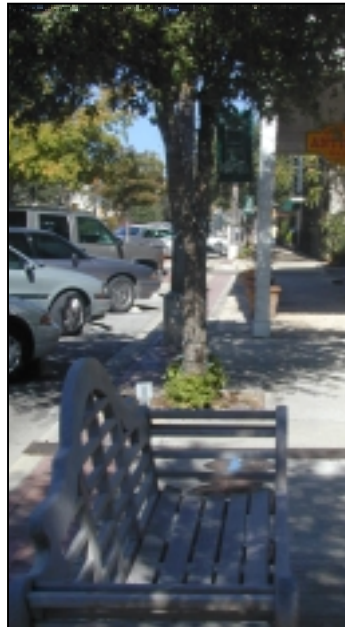


**Illustration 10-22**  
An Example of Aesthetic Street Furniture

### Street Furniture

Another important element of a pedestrian environment is the provision of a place for pedestrians to stop and rest, to take a break and take in the scenery. Further, to prevent clutter, trash receptacles are a necessity for any active pedestrian area. Lufkin has already recognized the need for street furniture, and has incorporated several benches and receptacles into the downtown area. However, the furniture that currently exists does not help to create a positive visual atmosphere within Downtown Lufkin; that is, the furniture is functional, but not aesthetically pleasing (i.e., benches are made of concrete and are not located in shaded areas). The incorporation of benches and trash receptacles that are designed with the desired

environment in mind can add to the aesthetics of the downtown area. As with special light fixtures, furniture can also help create a certain atmosphere within an area, just as it can within a room. *It is suggested that the City choose light fixtures, benches and trash receptacles that are of similar, complementary design.* This will begin to create the atmosphere within Downtown Lufkin for which the City is striving.



**Illustration 10-23**  
Street Furniture and Street Trees  
Contribute to a Pedestrian  
Environment

aesthetic quality is subjective in nature. However, protection of Downtown Lufkin in terms of basic visual quality could be achieved through the minimal regulation of building materials and building height.

### Building Materials

The concept of establishing allowable building materials is mainly to ensure that the construction of new structures and the rehabilitation of old buildings are completed in a manner that is in keeping with the Downtown vernacular.

Specifically, *the City should not allow metal-exterior buildings within the downtown area, and should require that all facades, including new or refurbished buildings, be of brick or similar material (in appearance and*

### ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

The idea of older downtown areas conjures many images, but principally the idea centers around the buildings and their design. Mostly flat facades, some with overhangs, constructed of brick, stone, or clapboard, these structures have been imitated in many newer Texas communities in search of a past. The City of Lufkin does not have to search, however. Lufkin's past is written on the walls of its old downtown buildings. In order to maintain the atmosphere within Downtown, and avoid the struggle of the new wanting to join the old (i.e., a fast food restaurant on the corner of this historic area), the City should consider some architectural guidelines. Such guidelines can be difficult to establish, primarily because



**Illustration 10-24**  
Brick Materials on a Downtown Lufkin Building

*quality) that is compatible with existing original materials.* These simple requirements would ensure the consistency of the materials used in Downtown Lufkin.

## Building Height

Downtown Lufkin is more dense than most other areas of the City, with buildings that are constructed close together, but most are relatively small in size and are generally three stories in height or less. In order to maintain consistency between new and existing



Illustration 10-25  
Two-Story Buildings in Downtown Lufkin

Downtown structures, *it is recommended that the City establish a regulation that requires the height of new or rehabilitated structures to be similar to what exists in Downtown Lufkin today.* An exception should be made for any building recognized as a focal point or City landmark. Exceptions should be made on a case-by-case basis. This height regulation will help to preserve the existing environment in Downtown Lufkin.

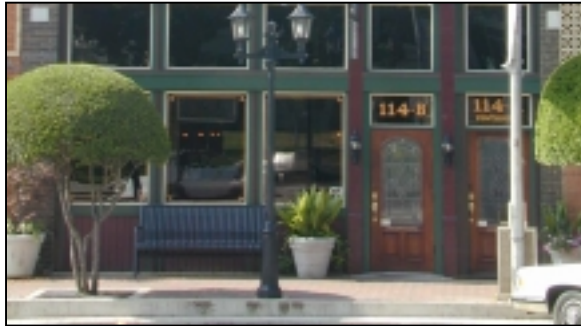
Further, in the pedestrian-oriented environment for which Lufkin is striving, it is important for the structures in the area to be constructed at a *human scale*. A human-scale environment could be described as a space wherein pedestrians feel comfortable, both psychologically and physically, with the size of structures and other elements of the built environment. This concept will be maintained and enhanced by requiring the height of buildings to be consistent with what currently exists.

## FUTURE CHALLENGES

There are many challenges involved in maintaining and enhancing downtown areas, especially those like Lufkin's that evolved during a different social and economic climate. There are two principal challenges with which Lufkin will likely be faced: maintenance and parking.

### Maintenance Challenges

Anything that is a product of the built environment that has been able to stand the test of time will require maintenance. Regular maintenance is required on things like an automobile and a home. The built environment of Downtown Lufkin is no exception to this rule; it requires and will continue to require maintenance of elements such as sidewalks, roadways, landscaping,



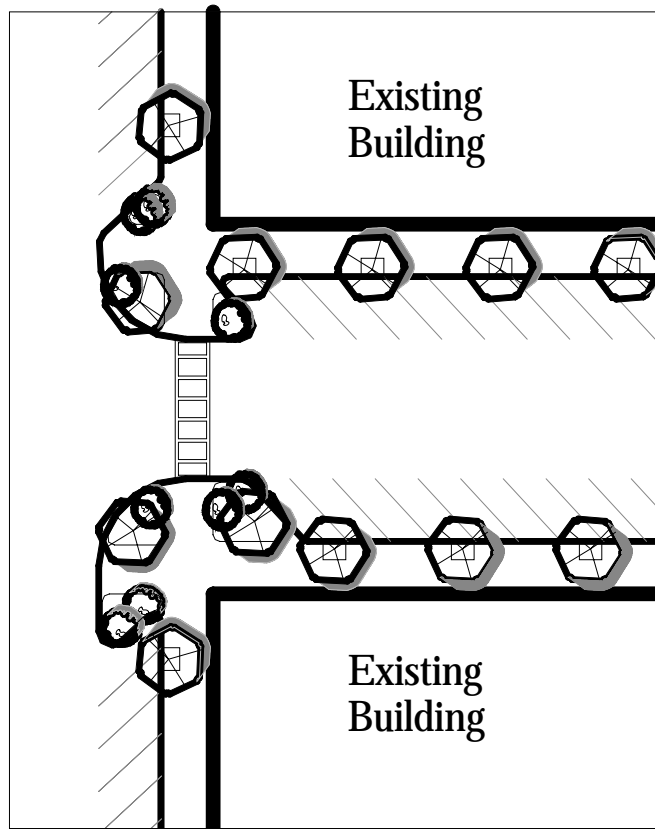
**Illustration 10-26**  
An Example of a Well Maintained Storefront

and the buildings themselves. *It is recommended that the City conduct regular reviews of the downtown area, note items that need to be addressed, prioritize them, and consistently attend to them.* In this way, Downtown Lufkin will be consistently maintained, and will be kept in a condition reflective of its importance within the City.

**Parking Challenges**

At the time of Downtown Lufkin's initial development, the need to park automobiles was not a consideration. Since then, the use of automobiles has evolved and has become a necessity. In order to attract people to the downtown area, parking must be available. Limited parking is available along the streets in front of the buildings, which has grown increasingly problematic in recent years. As Downtown Lufkin experiences increasing numbers of patrons and visitors,

parking is likely to become a greater challenge. *It is recommended that the City investigate the possibility of purchasing a small tract of land in the vicinity of the downtown area (before costs increase due to increased interest), for the eventual construction of a municipal parking lot when the need arises.* This parking lot could be constructed as part of or close to the proposed Transit Center, which is discussed in the following section.



**Illustration 10-27**  
Downtown Street Intersection Concept



**Illustration 10-28**  
The Location of the Future Downtown Transit Center

### THE PROPOSED TRANSIT CENTER

Mass transportation has become a growing concept throughout Texas. An increased awareness in recent years of air quality and the need for reduced use of automobiles has been at the forefront of increased demand. Local public transportation is available through the Brazos Valley Transit Authority (BVTA). Buses allow people to travel around Lufkin, providing them with access to many important destinations throughout the City, including City Hall. This local transit system has been successful, and has created a need for a transit-access facility in the downtown area. An application for a federal grant was prepared, and funds have subsequently been appropriated for such a facility. This new Transit Center will produce changes in the local transit system, which in turn creates an opportunity for Lufkin to change the perception of the local transit system and to make it an integral part of the fabric of the City as a whole.

This Transit Center provides the City with a prime opportunity to further revitalize Downtown Lufkin, and once again make it the heart of the City. One of the three phases discussed previously within this section that is essential to Downtown revitalization efforts is the need to bring people into Downtown Lufkin. As the hub of this system, Downtown will have increased visibility for both residents and visitors. The key to successfully using this opportunity to the greatest extent is to reinvent the concept behind the local transit system – it will be principally for Lufkin residents, but it can also be a major driving force in attracting additional tourism to the City if pursued in a comprehensive manner.

***It is strongly recommended that the City use the opportunity created by this new Transit Center to link Downtown Lufkin to other areas of interest throughout the City.*** It should be noted that a recommendation has been made within this Comprehensive Plan that convention activities, which now take place within the Civic Center located Downtown, should eventually be relocated (refer to the *Public Facilities Plan* section). Such activities should be relocated to a new convention center that should be constructed in close proximity to hotels, motels and restaurants, possibly on U.S. Highway 59. An expanded convention center would create a market for more visitors



**Illustration 10-29**  
**An Example of Transit Center, Plan View and**  
**Rendering**

## IMPLEMENTATION

Please refer to the following table, **Table 10-2**, for key recommendations and their time frame.

to Lufkin, thereby creating increased tourism within the City. In addition, the Ellen Trout Zoo is a major tourist destination, with approximately 125,000 annual visitors. Other possible tourist destinations include the Texas Forestry Museum, Kurth Memorial Library, the Museum of East Texas, and recreational opportunities (local parks, area lakes and rivers, etc.).

Downtown Lufkin should be recognized as the hub of this transit system, which would link the downtown area to all of the diverse local tourism opportunities. Many benefits from this type of system could be realized. The increased visibility of Downtown Lufkin was mentioned previously as a product of the construction of the new Transit Center; linking tourist destinations to Downtown allows them to share in this opportunity for increased visibility.

**Table 10-2:  
RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Target Time Period</b>
1.) Burial and/or relocation of overhead utility lines, wherever possible – RELATES TO PHASE 2	2002-2003 (Immediate)
2.) Integration of street trees - RELATES TO PHASE 2.	2002-2003 (Immediate)
3.) Integration of distinct light fixtures - RELATES TO PHASE 2.	2003-2004
4.) Creation of a revised CBD Zoning District or a new Overlay Zoning District covering Downtown - RELATES TO PHASE 1 & 2.	2002-2003 (Immediate)
5.) Construction of at least one primary gateway - RELATES TO PHASE 1.	2003-2004
6.) Purchase land for a future parking area in the vicinity of Downtown - RELATES TO PHASE 2.	2003-2004
7.) Establish a program for regular maintenance of the Downtown area - RELATES TO PHASE 2.	2002 (On-Going & Immediate)
8.) Construction of the Downtown Transit Center/Creation of Links to Tourist Destinations - RELATES TO PHASE 1, 2 & 3.	2003-2004 (As Soon As Possible)