

Comprehensive Plan 2001

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

With the publication and adoption of this Comprehensive Plan document, the City of Lufkin has taken an important step in shaping its future. The Plan will provide a very important tool for City staff and civic leaders to use in making sound planning decisions regarding the long-term growth and development of Lufkin. The various elements of the Plan are based upon realistic growth objectives and goals for the City that resulted from an intense comprehensive planning process involving a Steering Committee, citizens, Lufkin staff, elected and appointed officials, major stakeholders, business interests and the development community. In addition, a City-wide survey was conducted to ensure the greatest possible input from the citizens of Lufkin.

The future quality of life in Lufkin, as well as the environment of the City, will be substantially influenced by the manner in which Comprehensive Plan recommendations are administered and maintained.

The Comprehensive Plan should never be considered a finished product, but rather a broad guide for community growth and development that is always evolving and changing in scope.

Changes in Lufkin's socioeconomic climate and in development trends that were not anticipated during preparation of the Plan will occur from time to time,

and therefore, subsequent adjustments will be required. Elements of the City that were treated in terms of a general relationship to the overall area may, in the future, require more specific and detailed attention. Planning for the City's future should be a continuing process, and the Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a dynamic tool that can be modified and periodically updated to keep it in tune with changing conditions and trends.

The full benefits of the Plan for the City of Lufkin can only be realized by maintaining it as a vital, up-to-date document. ***As changes occur and new issues within the City become apparent, the Plan should be revised rather than ignored.*** By such action, the Plan will remain current and effective in meeting the City's decision-making needs regarding growth and development.

THE PLAN AS A GUIDE FOR DAILY DECISION- MAKING

The current physical layout of the City is a product of previous efforts put forth by many diverse individuals and groups. In the future, each new development that takes place, whether it is a subdivision that is platted, a home that is built, or a new school, church or shopping center that is constructed, represents an addition to Lufkin's physical form. The composite of all such

efforts and facilities creates the City as it is seen and experienced by its citizens and visitors. If planning is to be effective, it must guide each and every individual development decision. The City, in its daily decisions pertaining to whether to surface a street, to approve a residential plat, to amend a zoning ordinance, to enforce the building codes, or to construct a new utility line, should always refer to the basic proposals outlined within the Comprehensive Plan. The private builder or investor, likewise, should recognize the broad concepts and policies of the Plan so that their efforts become part of a meaningful whole in planning the City.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS AND PERIODIC REVIEW

The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Lufkin is intended to be a dynamic planning document – one that responds to changing needs and conditions. Plan amendments should not be made without thorough analysis of immediate needs, as well as consideration for long-term effects of proposed amendments. ***The Lufkin City Council and other Lufkin officials should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether or not it is consistent with the Plan's goals and policies, and whether it will be beneficial for the long-term health and vitality of the City of Lufkin.***

At one- to three-year intervals, a periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan with respect to current conditions and trends should be performed. Such on-going, scheduled reevaluations will provide a basis for adjusting capital expenditures and priorities, and will reveal changes and additions which should be made to the Plan in order to keep it current and applicable long-term. ***It would be appropriate to devote one annual meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to reviewing the status and continued applicability of the Plan in light of current conditions, and to prepare a report on these findings to the Lufkin City Council.*** Those items that appear to need specific attention should be examined in more detail, and changes and/or additions should be made accordingly. By such periodic reevaluations, the Plan will remain functional, and will continue to give civic leaders effective guidance in decision-making. Periodic reviews of the Plan should include consideration of the following:

- ◆ The City's progress in implementing the Plan;
- ◆ Changes in conditions that form the basis of the Plan;
- ◆ Community support for the Plan's goals, objectives & policies; and,
- ◆ Changes in State laws.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

An informed, involved citizenry is a vital element of a democratic society. The needs and desires of the public are important considerations in Lufkin's decision-making process. Citizen participation takes many forms, from educational forums to serving on City boards and commissions. A broad range of perspectives and ideas at public hearings helps City leaders and the City Council to make more informed decisions for the betterment of the City as a whole. Lufkin should continue to encourage as many forms of community involvement as possible as the City implements its Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to periodic annual reviews, the Comprehensive Plan should undergo a complete, more thorough review and update every five years. The review and updating process should begin with the establishment of a citizen committee similar to the one appointed to assist in the preparation of this Plan, thereby encouraging citizen input from the beginning of the process. Specific input on major changes should be sought from various groups, including property owners, neighborhood groups, civic leaders and major stakeholders, developers, merchants, and other citizens and individuals who express an interest in the long-term growth and development of the City.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

There are two primary methods of implementing the Comprehensive Plan - proactive and reactive methods. Both must be used in an effective manner in order to successfully achieve the recommendations contained within the Plan.

Examples of proactive methods include:

- ◆ Developing a capital improvements program (CIP), by which the City expends funds to finance certain public improvements (e.g., utility lines, roadways, etc.), meeting objectives that are cited within the Plan;
- ◆ Establishing/enforcing Zoning Ordinances;
- ◆ Establishing/enforcing Subdivision Ordinances.

Examples of reactive methods include:

- ◆ Rezoning a development proposal that would enhance the City and that is based on the Comprehensive Plan;
- ◆ Site plan review;
- ◆ Subdivision review.

Several specific implementation strategies for the City of Lufkin's Comprehensive Plan are described within the following sections.

Capital Improvements Programming

The Comprehensive Plan makes recommendations on the various public improvements that will be needed to accommodate growth and development envisioned for the City over the next 20 years or more. Many of the changes involve improvements that will be financed by future improvement programs. It will be a desirable practice to invest regularly in the physical maintenance and enhancement of the City of Lufkin rather than to undertake large improvement-type programs at longer time intervals. A modest amount of money expended annually on prioritized items in accordance with Plan recommendations will produce a far greater return to the City than will large expenditures at long intervals.

Annexation and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Annexation is the process by which communities extend municipal services, regulations, voting privileges and taxing authority to new territory with the purpose of protecting the public's health, safety and general welfare. Chapter 43 of the Texas Local Government Code prescribes the process by which communities can annex land within Texas. Annexation is essential to the efficient and logical extension of urban services. Because the City of Lufkin is a home-rule

municipality, it can annex land on a non-consensual basis; however, it should be noted that non-consensual annexation has become more difficult for cities in Texas due to recent changes in state law.

The majority of incorporated entities equal in size to the City of Lufkin have a two-mile ETJ, as does Lufkin. The ETJ area is shown on the Future Land Use Plan, **Plate 8-1**. Lufkin has several thousand acres that can be developed in the ETJ. ***It is in the best interest of the City of Lufkin to require areas within the ETJ to be annexed prior to development rather than after development has occurred.*** After annexation and prior to development, the City of Lufkin will be able to affect development in a more meaningful way, especially in terms of ensuring that the City's development standards are met. However, the Texas State statute has established service and other requirements to keep home-rule municipalities from misusing their annexation power. Annexation is important to the long-term well being of communities; therefore, such action should be carried out in accordance with established policies. Lufkin should seek annexation of areas identified as desirable growth areas.

Based on its size, Lufkin can annex approximately 1,700 acres per year on a non-consensual basis. If this amount is not annexed within a given year, it can be carried over to the next year; however, no more land than is equal to

30 percent of the City's total land area can be annexed within a one-year time period. ***It is recommended that Lufkin annex some land every year, although it is not necessary to annex the maximum allowed each year.*** By doing this, the City will have enough land for the projected population growth beyond the twenty-year planning period of this Comprehensive Plan. ***A gradual but sustained annexation program is recommended as the best approach for Lufkin.***

Areas south and east of the current City limits in and around the identified Alternative B industrial/business park site and around the airport site are considered desirable growth areas. Related to this concept is the fact that the proposed alignment of Interstate Highway 69, which could be a major growth catalyst in coming years, lies to the east. Also, as stated in the Infrastructure Plan, utilities can be extended to these areas in a reasonably efficient manner. ***Lufkin should monitor areas in this vicinity carefully, and should fully enforce Subdivision Ordinance regulations (where extraterritorial jurisdiction applies) to ensure that development that occurs is in accordance with City standards.*** This will help alleviate potential problems in the future when the City initiates annexation, especially problems related to substandard development or to service provision.

Administrative Processes

The usual processes for reviewing and processing zoning amendments, development plans, and subdivision plans provide significant opportunities for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Each zoning, development and subdivision decision should be evaluated and weighed against applicable proposals contained within the Plan. The Plan allows Lufkin to review proposals and requests in light of an officially prepared document adopted through a sound, thorough planning process. If decisions are made that are inconsistent with Plan recommendations, then they should include actions to modify or amend the Plan accordingly in order to ensure consistency and fairness in future decision-making (refer to the *Future Land Use Plan* section).

The act of subdividing land to create building sites is one that has the greatest effect on the overall design and image of Lufkin. Much of the basic physical form of the City is currently created by the layout of streets, easements, and lots. In the future, the basic physical form of Lufkin will be further affected by elements such as new development, both residential and non-residential, and the implementation of the Thoroughfare Plan. As mentioned previously, many of the growth and development proposals contained within the City's Comprehensive Plan can be achieved through the exercise of subdivision control and other "reactive" practices.

Some elements of the Plan, such as major thoroughfare rights-of-way and drainage easements, can be influenced, guided and actually achieved during the process of subdividing the land. Once the subdivision has been filed (recorded) and development has begun, the subdivision becomes a permanent, integral part of the City's urban fabric. Thereafter, it can be changed only through great effort and expense.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation is probably one of the most important, yet most difficult, aspects of the comprehensive planning process. Without viable, realistic mechanisms for implementation, the recommendations contained within the Comprehensive Plan will be difficult to realize. The following points specify ways to implement the various recommendations within the Plan.

**Table 11-1:
SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations	Target Time Period
1.) The City should update the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance to implement the guidelines, proposals, and standards recommended within the Comprehensive Plan.	2002 (Immediate)
2.) As changes occur and new issues within the City become apparent, the Plan should be revised rather than ignored	On-Going
3.) The Lufkin City Council and other Lufkin officials should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether or not it is consistent with the Plan's goals and policies, and whether it will be beneficial for the long-term health and vitality of the City of Lufkin.	On-Going
4.) It would be appropriate to devote one annual meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission to reviewing the status and continued applicability of the Plan in light of current conditions, and to prepare a report on these findings to the Lufkin City Council.	On-Going (Annual)
5.) It is in the best interest of the City of Lufkin to require areas within the ETJ to be annexed prior to development rather than after development has occurred. If annexation does not occur, new development should be required to install infrastructure in accordance with the City's Subdivision Ordinance.	On-Going
6.) It is recommended that Lufkin annex some land every year, although it is not necessary to annex the maximum allowed each year. Such a gradual but sustained annexation program is the best approach for Lufkin.	On-Going (Annual)
7.) The City should adopt an ordinance to mandate periodic updating of the Comprehensive Plan.	2002 (Immediate)
8.) The City should investigate the feasibility of using Chapter 395, which enables the cities to enact an impact fee, as a funding mechanism to assist in financing the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) (i.e., for projects related to roadways, water, and sewer).	2002 (Immediate)
9.) The City should include recommendations contained herein within the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) based on priority.	On-Going