

Comprehensive Plan 2001

HOUSING STRATEGIES PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Lufkin is a community of people who care about their homes. The purpose of this section of the Comprehensive Plan is to address the present character and quality of neighborhoods in Lufkin and to identify ways in which to preserve or enhance them. The Plan discusses strategies for the stabilization and rehabilitation of deteriorating housing stock and the preservation of older neighborhoods, as well as guidelines for new residential development.

One of the primary reasons people or businesses remain within or move to an area is the availability of quality, affordable housing and residential neighborhoods. The maintenance and quality of housing within neighborhoods is a primary reflection of the attitudes of the people toward their community. The ability to provide and maintain reasonable housing conditions and adequate housing in terms of space and facilities also has an influence upon community quality, environment and sustainability. Where private citizens of the municipality take an active part in advancing overall community interest, substantial improvement and enhancement of existing housing and neighborhoods can be achieved, the quality of existing housing can be maintained, and a good environment for future housing can be assured.

HOUSING &



NEIGHBORHOOD AREAS

For the purpose of discussion within this Housing Strategies element, a *neighborhood* can be described as a residential area in the community with boundaries demarcated by thoroughfares, collector streets, or other man-made or natural features. The neighborhood may vary in size from several blocks to hundreds of acres. However, a neighborhood cannot adequately be described solely by its physical structures. The definition of a *neighborhood* is affected by an almost indefinable sense of community and quality of life enjoyed by its residents. It is these two elements together, the positive physical and social aspects of a neighborhood, for which the City should strive.

Each neighborhood is unique, and it is that uniqueness which makes neighborhoods difficult to define with any degree of precision. However, for residential development and planning purposes, the following factors should be considered:



ILLUSTRATION 6-1
A Single-Family Dwelling Unit

- ◆ Physical condition of housing units (this is described by housing type within the Baseline Analysis and later within this section);
- ◆ Opportunities for social interaction (i.e., parks);
- ◆ Careful and strategic placement of public and retail land uses (i.e., on the edges of the neighborhood);
- ◆ Proximity to schools, churches, and recreational facilities;
- ◆ Accessibility by emergency services such as fire, medical and police;
- ◆ Adequate lighting and other features which foster the feeling of safety (along streets and within park areas);
- ◆ Continued investment in public and private property to stabilize property values (i.e., consistent code enforcement);
- ◆ Acceptable level of owner-occupied dwelling units; and,
- ◆ Condition of public facilities and infrastructure serving the area (i.e., street maintenance and adequate drainage facilities).

A successful neighborhood is the creation of a sustainable environment where ongoing investment in property is supported by public investment in schools, parks, greenspace, and infrastructure, where there are opportunities for social interaction, where there is accessibility for pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles, and where distinctive characteristics are

apparent, which give an area a unique identity.

RECOMMENDED HOUSING STRATEGIES

The quality and livability of Lufkin's neighborhoods are integral to the community's overall character and quality. Upkeep and maintenance of both private and public property are critical to neighborhood viability and sustainability. Maintenance of neighborhoods and facilities also affects the larger community. If left unabated, blighted areas create a 'ripple effect,' which impedes other civic objectives, including such actions as economic development and private investment.

Thus, it is in the public interest to maintain the highest possible housing quality and environmental character within each neighborhood area. Cooperative action by property owners, tenants, the municipality and volunteers will be required to maintain and upgrade the quality of housing.

Four strategies aim to encourage owner-occupied housing, promote maintenance and/or rehabilitation of aging housing; and to address redevelopment/infill issues. These strategies are based in part on the assessment of the City's housing stock that was conducted in conjunction with the existing land use survey during the data-gathering phase of the



EXISTING HOUSING CONDITION - 2000
 City of Lufkin, Texas

Structure Type	Number ⁽¹⁾	Percent
Type 1	6,792	67.5%
Type 2	2,708	26.8%
Type 3	509	5.1%
Type 4	57	0.6%
Total	10,066	100.0%

Source: Dunkin, Sefko & Assoc., Inc., Land Use Survey, conducted in 06/00.

⁽¹⁾Housing condition was assessed on single-family and duplex units only.

comprehensive planning process. **Table 6-1** shows the information from the Baseline Analysis. **Plate 6-1** shows the various areas of Lufkin identified for each type of housing strategy.

Neighborhood Preservation

In areas where sound, quality housing exists, a preservation strategy is appropriate. Over 67 percent of the housing units in Lufkin have been identified as “Type 1”, which describes units that are maintained in good physical condition (refer to the Baseline Analysis for additional information). The purpose of the Neighborhood Preservation Strategy, which correlates with the areas identified with a “1” on **Plate 6-1**, is to recognize areas in which *the City should sustain and protect existing desirable conditions. This can most successfully be achieved by proactive code enforcement in and around these areas, and by ensuring complementary relationships with adjacent land uses* (i.e., careful review of development proposals proximate to these areas). In addition, an effective Neighborhood Preservation strategy includes the continued provision and maintenance of adequate utilities and

community facilities, such as parks, schools and streets. Preservation efforts by Lufkin within these areas should minimize the need for future rehabilitation programs. As part of the activity of normal planning, community development, and code enforcement practices, the Neighborhood Preservation strategy can be furthered by appropriate City departments on an on-going basis.

It should be noted that Lufkin has many homes that are representative of the architectural and cultural history of the community; the majority of these homes are located near Downtown and urban core of the City (i.e., along Mantooth Avenue). The neighborhoods in which they exist are distinguished from other neighborhoods by their age, mature vegetation, character, charm, and uniqueness, which is irreplaceable. When stable and secure, these neighborhoods attract families and invite reinvestment into the area. The Neighborhood Preservation strategy is applicable for these unique neighborhoods as well.



ILLUSTRATION 6-2
 A Single-Family Dwelling Unit

Housing Rehabilitation and Maintenance

The Housing Rehabilitation and Maintenance strategy is appropriate where the housing units are substantially sound, but are in need of minor and/or intensive repairs, which are identified as “Type 2” and “Type 3” housing units in the Baseline Analysis. The main purpose of this strategy is to reduce the incidence of further deterioration of these housing units. If minor repairs are not accomplished on Type 2 units, such units may fall into the Type 3 category, making rehabilitation an increasing challenge. Currently, almost 27 percent of the City’s housing stock falls into the Type 2 category, while just over five percent fall into the Type 3 category. The Housing and Rehabilitation strategy correlates with the areas identified with a “2” or “3” on **Plate 6-1**. It is recommended that the Type 2 units that have been identified (approximately 2,700 units) be immediately addressed for several reasons:

- ◆ The structures will contribute to Lufkin’s future stock of affordable housing. New housing of equal size and quality could not be constructed and sold at the same prices of these units.

- ◆ Over a period of time, if neglected, these areas can further deteriorate such that preservation or rehabilitation will no longer be a realistic option (i.e., they will regress into a “Type 4” condition);
- ◆ If the deterioration of housing/neighborhoods is not addressed, the decline may negatively impact surrounding areas with sound housing;
- ◆ The overall image or “quality of life” of the community can be enhanced through consistent action, by the City and the general public (i.e., volunteerism), targeted in areas of decline.

There are numerous programs that the City can initiate to begin to improve these areas. One such program is the HOME rehabilitation program⁶⁻¹, which is administered through inspection services. *Due to the fact that housing rehabilitation programs have an area-wide focus, it is recommended that the City continue to solicit community support for housing rehabilitation and maintenance on an area-wide basis.* Further, the City should provide assistance to citizens in need of funding (i.e., information on grants), and should establish a system for feedback and

⁶⁻¹ This program is administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) with funds allocated to states and local governments by a specified formula; requires a minimum amount of funding to qualify for program participation. Funds can be used for acquisition, rehabilitation and new construction of housing, or to provide direct rental assistance. Expenditures require a 25 percent local, non-federal match for every dollar used for HOME funds. Monies can also be used for financing assistance, including grants, loans, and other HUD-approved financing mechanisms



continued contact with property owners to encourage continued maintenance of the structures.

Last year, the City rehabilitated 12 homes under the HOME program. Lufkin has applied for a \$500,000 grant next year to double last year's reconstructed homes to 24; this program appears to be working. *The City should continue to pursue annual financing of the program, and should continue to increase the number of rehabilitated homes each year when possible.*

Property Clearance and Redevelopment

Redevelopment is the demolition, removal, or clearance of structures and preparation of the lot for new construction. Redevelopment is necessary when a housing unit reaches such a state of deterioration that a rehabilitation strategy becomes unfeasible.

As **Table 6-1** shows, only 57 structures out of over 10,000 single-family and duplex units (0.6 percent) were considered beyond the point of rehabilitation and therefore were in need of a Clearance and Redevelopment strategy. At the point where housing units need to be cleared, they pose a significant health and safety issue for local citizens; the City, therefore, should continue to be proactive in addressing such

structures. *It is recommended that the City identify a set number of units per year that need to be demolished, and allocate funds accordingly, within areas designated as "4" on Plate 6-1.*

Development Guidance

The standards for new residential development should be such that maintenance and preservation strategies become necessary only over time. Development guidance, either during the stages of zoning change or subdivision approval, provides City staff with an opportunity to ensure that the City's commitment to quality will be reflected in a residential development of lasting value and stability. *It is recommended that the City develop a range of lot and dwelling sizes to continue the goal of a balanced housing mix* (also see Housing Density). In addition, *the City should continue to enforce the Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, building codes and minimum housing standards in areas that are undeveloped and are identified*



ILLUSTRATION 6-3

A Single-Family Dwelling Unit Under Construction



Table 6-2
HOUSING TYPE - 2000
City of Lufkin, Texas

Housing Type	Number	Percent
Single-Family	9,757	74.40%
Duplex	196	1.49%
Town Home	113	0.86%
Multi-Family	2,632	20.07%
Manufactured Home	416	3.17%
TOTAL	13,114	100.00%

Source: Dunkin, Sefko & Assoc., Inc., Land Use Survey, conducted in 06/00.

with a “I” on Plate 6-1. Proactive enforcement of City policies and regulations prior to development is critical to the maintenance of the local housing stock and to the high standards of community development to which the City is committed.

MAINTAINING NEIGHBORHOODS

Although sometimes broadly defined, “neighborhood integrity” and “sustainability” essentially refer to the quality of the physical appearance of neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that are conducive to a high quality of life are sometimes called “livable neighborhoods” – people want their neighborhood to be a quality environment. *Quality of life* is a difficult phrase to define. However, there are elements that can be identified that enhance the quality of a neighborhood environment, such as street trees, sidewalks, and well-maintained streets. With new neighborhoods, incorporating such elements is relatively simple by requiring them through City regulation. The provision of such elements in older neighborhoods is no less important to the quality of life, but is more of a challenge because it must be done retroactively. In order *to ensure that neighborhoods within Lufkin maintain a high level of quality in the future, a gradual and sustained program of improvements and maintenance is recommended* that includes the following:

- ♦ Provide bicycle routes within rights-of-way (refer to the *Thoroughfare Plan* section);
- ♦ Provide pedestrian routes (i.e., sidewalks or trails);
- ♦ Provide recreation spaces within neighborhoods;
- ♦ Encourage the formation of neighborhood associations;
- ♦ Continue proactive code-enforcement efforts, and be proactive in protecting the appearance of residential areas;

While some of these suggestions require capital reinvestment, others do not and may be easily achieved with limited capital outlay. *It is recommended that the City allocate capital and maintenance funds to an established reinvestment program for older neighborhoods.*



INSERT PLATE 6-1



HOUSING DENSITY

A mix of residential densities and housing types is important to give residents a choice in selection of housing types. The Comprehensive Plan provides locations for various types and densities of residential development in order to create opportunities for varied housing types while retaining the desired character of each neighborhood. Low density residential housing should be developed within those areas where neighborhood units are appropriate. Medium and high density residential (e.g., townhomes and apartments, respectively) housing should be planned only within areas adjacent to major thoroughfares and in locations where public facilities and services will be able to meet the need of a larger population. *It is recommended that the future density mix of housing types stay generally consistent with the housing mix that Lufkin has today.*

The *Future Land Use Plan* (see **Plate 8-1** in the *Future Land Use Plan* section) provides for flexibility in the type of housing built. Within a planned residential area, several types of housing can be developed. For example, an area can be planned for multi-family or apartment units adjacent to a major thoroughfare, with a majority of single-family detached homes within the interior of the neighborhood that are buffered by duplex units. In this way, a property owner can choose to develop a particular housing type, and diverse housing options will be available for

future residents. **Table 6-3** shows the current requirements for single-family residential development.

The following standards are recommended for inclusion in the City's Zoning Ordinance for residential development:

- ◆ Lot size: 20,000 square feet – Dwelling size: 1,600 square feet;
- ◆ Lot size: 10,000 square feet – Dwelling size: 1,400 square feet;
- ◆ Lot size: 6,000 square feet – Dwelling size: 1,100 square feet;
- ◆ Lot size: 4,000 square feet – Dwelling size: 850 square feet;
- ◆ Townhomes:
 - Lot size: 2,000 square feet – Dwelling size: 1,100 square feet.

The current “A” Apartment Dwelling District allows over 35 dwelling units per acre. *It is recommended that a new*

Table 6-3
SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING REQUIREMENTS – 2001
City of Lufkin, Texas

Current Single-Family Zoning Categories	Current Minimum Lot Size Required
Residential Large	10,000 square feet
Residential Medium	6,000 square feet
Residential Small	4,000 square feet
SF/Mixed Use	4,000 square feet

Source: City of Lufkin Zoning Ordinance

district be created that allows a maximum of 21 to 24 units per acre.



Affordable Housing

Housing affordability remains a key issue for cities throughout the state of Texas and the country. As noted in the Baseline Analysis (Table 2-18), Lufkin’s housing units are already generally affordable. While the new units may not be as affordable as existing units, families vacating existing units to purchase a new unit will make the existing unit available to an incoming family upgrading from another area. Housing for single, working parents and lower-income workers is a concern for businesses that rely on this segment of the labor force. In addition, senior citizens and other



ILLUSTRATION 6-4
Affordable Housing

segments of the population who may be on fixed incomes are particularly affected by increasing housing costs. *It is recommended that the City continue efforts to ensure that these types of households are represented in the context of available housing within Lufkin by identifying locations for a variety of housing types and densities.*



ILLUSTRATION 6-5
A Manufactured Home Dwelling Unit

MANUFACTURED HOUSING

Manufactured homes represent a significant percentage of the affordable housing market. With the financing schedules that are available to buyers, purchasing a manufactured home becomes affordable whereas a site-built home may not be economically feasible. There are several areas of Lufkin wherein manufactured homes are a significant housing type. As discussed within the *Future Land Use Plan* element, there are areas within the City designated for manufactured homes on the Future Land Use Plan map (Plate 8-1). These primarily consist of either 1)



ILLUSTRATION 6-6
Example of a Manufactured Home With a 6:12 Pitched Roof



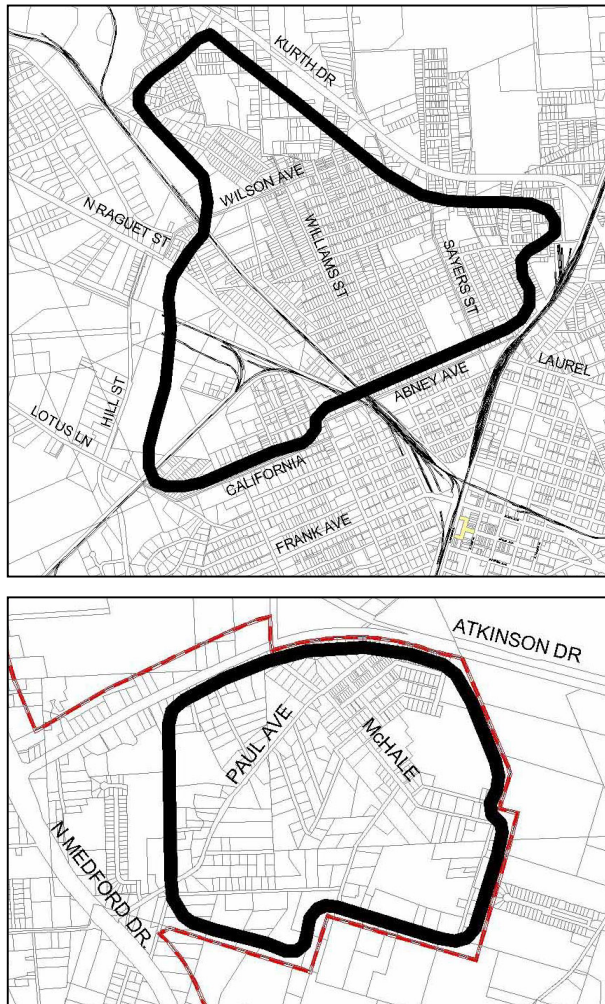


ILLUSTRATION 6-6
Recommended Manufactured Home Overlay District Areas

areas where a significant percentage of the housing units are manufactured homes, and/or 2) areas where manufactured homes would be an improvement to the existing housing composition.

There are several high-quality manufactured home developments in Lufkin. However, one of the issues that cities have been challenged with in

relation to manufactured housing is the maintenance of quality over a period of time; this housing type tends to experience deterioration, and *it is recommended that the City establish related standards in order to support additional high quality manufactured home development in designated areas through a Manufactured Home Overlay District.* Standards related to the quality of the manufactured home, intended to help ensure that these housing units are kept to a high standard, should be established that incorporate the following:

- ◆ All development standards of the base zoning district (e.g., setbacks, driveway construction, etc.) should be met.
- ◆ The addition of the manufactured home should not degrade the character of the neighborhood and the structure is considered to be of equal or greater quality than the majority of existing residences in the vicinity.
- ◆ The manufactured home structure should not be on a major thoroughfare (e.g., Kurth Drive, Raguet Street, Old Mill, Abney Avenue, Paul Avenue, Atkinson Drive, etc.).
- ◆ The manufactured home should be placed on a permanent concrete foundation that complies with the City’s building codes for residential structures (i.e., no wheels).
- ◆ The roof should have a required minimum pitch of 3:12.



- ◆ The trailer tongue should be removed.
- ◆ The minimum dwelling unit size should be 1,000 square feet.
- ◆ The front door of the manufactured home should face the street.
- ◆ If the space between the manufactured home and the foundation is visible, skirting must be used to visibly hide that space.
- ◆ In addition to the above requirements, each manufactured home must have a minimum of three of the following attributes:
 - A 6:12 pitch roof,
 - Multiple hips on the front elevation,
 - A width of at least (28) twenty-eight feet,
 - An attached garage,
 - Stone, masonry, or similar treatment comprising a minimum of 20 percent of the area of the front elevation,
 - The length of the home is less than 2.5 times the width.

Illustration 6-6 shows the areas recommended for the Manufactured Home Overlay District.

HOUSING POLICIES

Table 6-4 outlines the recommended housing policies for the City of Lufkin.



**Table 6-4:
SPECIFIC HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations	Target Time Period
1.) The City should use a Neighborhood Preservation strategy to sustain and protect existing desirable conditions, specifically by proactive code enforcement and land use regulation in and around areas designated as “1” on Plate 6-1.	On-Going
2.) The City should solicit community support for housing rehabilitation and maintenance on an area-wide basis, should provide assistance to citizens in need of funding (i.e., information on grants), and should establish a system for feedback for continued maintenance for areas designated as “2” and “3” on Plate 6-1.	On-Going
3.) The City should continue to pursue annual financing of the HOME program, and should continue to increase the number of rehabilitated homes each year when possible.	Annual
4.) The City should identify a set number of housing units per year that need to be demolished and allocate funds accordingly within areas designated as “4” on Plate 6-1.	Annual
5.) The City should develop a range of lot and dwelling sizes to continue the goal of a balanced housing mix.	On-Going
6.) The City should continue to enforce the Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, building codes and minimum housing standards in areas that are undeveloped and are identified with a “1” on Plate 6-1.	On-Going
7.) The City should establish a gradual and sustained program of improvements and maintenance for older neighborhoods to ensure that a high level of quality is maintained in the future.	Immediate and On-Going
8.) It is recommended that the City allocate capital and maintenance funds to an established reinvestment program for older neighborhoods.	On-Going
9.) It is recommended that the future density mix of housing types stay generally consistent with the housing mix that Lufkin has today.	On-Going
10.) It is recommended that the City establish related standards in order to support additional high quality manufactured home development in designated areas through a Manufactured Home Overlay District.	Immediate (2002)
11.) The City should consider initiatives that will promote the development of single family dwellings within the city limits.	On-Going

(Revised March 16, 2004)

