



PIECING THINGS TOGETHER

CITY OF
Lockhart
TEXAS

2020 Annual Report

FROM THE CITY MANAGER

To say COVID-19 presented our community with unprecedented challenges would be an understatement.



closing spaces to walk-in traffic when case numbers suggested that to be the best course of action. We kept the public informed, keeping our

Before the first cases of coronavirus in Lockhart and Caldwell County were reported, the effects of a worldwide pandemic were felt almost immediately as federal, state and local branches of government worked to assess the situation and determine the best course of action to keep people safe, businesses operational and children’s educations on track.

website and social media current with the latest updates.

Looking back at the year that was, it’s apparent that our city government not only helped keep things together for our residents and keep the community primed for economic recovery, but also visibly continued to make progress in a number of areas.

The pandemic would have been challenging enough on its own, but a contentious national election year and civil unrest amplified tensions felt not only locally, but nationally as well.

Our employees and volunteers, along with our City Council, are dedicated to ensuring Lockhart continues to improve and evolve.

Our city’s employees rolled up their sleeves and went to work, doing the jobs necessary to keep the city working as the pandemic wore on, persevering admirably in the face of adversity. Critical development projects continued to move forward and resident concerns were responded to.

This 2020 annual report is a way for our many city departments to highlight how they help make Lockhart a better place to live and increase awareness of how their work contributed to progress seen during the past year. It is an honor and a pleasure to serve the Lockhart community, and I remain grateful for the opportunity.

As a city, we took measures to protect the public and our workers during the pandemic, taking necessary steps that included installing protective screens and barriers to temporarily

Sincerely,

Steve Lewis
City Manager

CITY COUNCIL



FRONT ROW (l-r): Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez, Mayor Lew White, District 3 Councilmember Kara McGregor.

BACK ROW (l-r): Councilmember At-Large Brad Westmoreland, District 1 Councilmember Juan Mendoza, District 2 Councilmember David Bryant, District 4 Councilmember Jeffry Michelson.

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ADMINISTRATION

- Completed the City's first employee classification and compensation study in order to ensure market/internal structure alignment, identify paths for career progression and address recruitment and retention needs.
- Developed and implemented practices to comply with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).
- City leadership met regularly to hear COVID-19 updates and manage operational strategies.
- Kept essential operations going during the pandemic through various measures, including teleworking and revising work schedules.
- Provided the public with continuous, consistent communication about COVID-19 through print, digital and virtual avenues since March, building and maintaining a COVID-19 webpage to provide information.
- Produced numerous online and written communications, including building a webpage, to support the 2020 US Census outreach.
- Finalized road construction cost-sharing agreement with DR Horton for the construction of Maple Street.



Prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic in Lockhart, communicating to the public the importance of getting involved with the 2020 US Census remained a priority throughout the year. Lockhart's self-response rates mirrored the national average and remained above the state average.

CITY COUNCIL



- Participated in an all-day planning session to develop city-wide goals and strategies for two years. These goals were ultimately adopted by council resolution.
- Approved the classification and compensation study, implementing the funding recommendations in the FY 20-21 budget.
- Appointed a new Municipal Court Judge, Darlon Sojak, following the retirement of Judge Coggins.
- Approved the establishment of measures to help families and businesses, including the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Grant and Economic Recovery Loan Programs and the Emergency Utility Relief Grant Program.



- Disposal of 728 S. Main Street property to The Well Church.
- Creation of the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund Advisory Board.
- Advanced the abatement of Lockhart Housing Authority dangerous residential structures and potential redevelopment of the site.

BUILDING AND INSPECTIONS



- Completion of an extensive remodel at H-E-B Lockhart.
- Approved plans for a remodel that will add online grocery pickup at Walmart. Construction to begin after the first of the year.
- Plans were received for an interior cosmetic remodel at Walmart. The interior remodel is projected to begin in early 2021.



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- Historical Preservation Commission considered 18 Certificate for Alteration applications, prepared a Biennial Report for the City Council, and recommended Text Amendments to multiple sections of Chapter 28 “Historic Districts and Landmarks.” Three Certificates for Alteration were approved administratively.
- Zoning Board of Adjustments considered six Zoning Variances, one Fence Variance, and two Special Exception applications.
- Planning and Zoning Commission considered 19 Specific Use Permit applications, 12 Zoning Map Change applications, one Text Amendment to Chapter 64 “Zoning,” two PDD Development Plans, 11 Subdivision Plats, and one Subdivision Variance with no plat. Nine Subdivision Minor Plats were approved administratively. The Commission also reviewed and recommended approval of comprehensive Text Amendments to Chapter 52 “Subdivision Regulations.”
- City Council considered 12 Zoning Map Change applications, Text Amendments to Chapter 28 “Historic Districts and Landmarks” and Chapter 64 “Zoning”, one PDD Development Plan, and one Appeal of a Planning and Zoning Commission Denial of a Specific Use Permit application.
- The City Council accepted a Biennial Report from the Historical Preservation Commission, approved a Street Name Change from Robert E. Lee Street to Red Tail Lane, and approved a Road Construction and Reimbursement Agreement for Maple Street.
- The City Council accepted two Impact Fee Semi-Annual Reports from the Impact Fee Advisory Committee.
- The Wayfinding Committee met 14 times. The committee’s final product is expected to be a report recommending locations and guidelines for various types of wayfinding signs, including priorities in implementation and a funding strategy.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Worked with Garner Economics on an intensive study and analysis to enhance the Lockhart EDC's strategy for attracting businesses.
- Adopted a new Target Industry Strategy that will frame Lockhart's growth over the next five years.
- Worked with Iron Ox, a robotic farming company, to expand operations to Lockhart.
- Completed the design and launch of the new Lockhart EDC website.
- Hired an Economic Development Specialist.
- Began the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Grant and COVID-19 Economic Recovery Loan programs.
- Established a new economic development office at 215 E. Market Street.
- Created the BIG Grant program to improve appearance of downtown businesses and buildings
- Acquisition of property following the feasibility study of creating a new 75-acre industrial/distribution park near SH 130 (Project Future) by selling bonds backed by the Economic Development Sales Tax.

ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

- Expanded services with the LCRA's tree trimming contractor in order to protect the public and ensure safe reliable electrical service.

EMS (Administered by Ascension Seton)

- Updated the Standard Operating Guidelines to reflect new changes in human resources and regulatory standards.
- Entered into the pursuit of purchasing a new re-mounted ambulance
- Hired three paramedics, which filled all existing openings

FINANCE

- Adopted a new comprehensive purchasing policy and manual.
- Prepared City's first Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR).
- Received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association.
- Completion of the restructuring the city's IT infrastructure, including the server room at City Hall and the police department.
- Negotiated new fleet replacement program with Enterprise.
- Implemented online purchase orders to eliminate the triplicate paper system.

FIRE DEPARTMENT



- Chief served on the LISD Safety Task Force and the Career and Technical Education Committee to enhance the safety and education of children in the community.
- The Caldwell County Hazard Mitigation Plan in which the city participated in with the county was finalized on July 23, 2020. It will be up for renewal in 2025.
- Fire Chief served on the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) Homeland Security Task Force which develops programs to assist in the overall preparedness of our region.
- Two new state of the art Scott brand Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) costing were placed into service.
- Purchased two Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)



for Lockhart Fire Rescue. The AEDs will enhance the fire departments response to medical emergencies, cardiac events, especially during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Specifications were developed and an order placed for a new Engine 1, a 2020 Pierce cus-

tom fire apparatus. The new fire pumper will replace Engine 4, a Pierce 2010 custom pumper, as the front-line pumper at Fire Station No. 1 at 201 W. Market Street. Engine 4 will move into reserve status. The new fire apparatus will be delivered in summer/fall of 2021.

LIBRARY SERVICES

- Installed the Story Walk at City Park. The Story Walk consists of several signs that line the sidewalk that begins by City Park pond and continues to the western entrance of the park. Pages of a book are copied and attached to the signs so families can enjoy them while getting some fresh air and exercise. The books/signs are updated regularly.
- Completed an inventory of library materials to gain an accurate, updated understanding of what is currently on the shelves, what needs to be replaced, what is missing and what needs to be removed from rotation. Following inventory, the card catalog is updated for accuracy.
- Began the curbside delivery program to continue distribution of library materials to patrons during COVID-19-related closures and continually modified operations throughout the year to provide library services to the public while reducing the risk of spreading COVID-19.
- Maintained a YouTube Channel to interact with library patrons through programs such as Virtual Storytime, which was created this year to maintain engagement with the public
- Held modified versions of the downtown trick-or-treat event and the Dickens Parade.



MUNICIPAL COURT

- Took on extra duties, adapting operations to provide a safe, socially distanced option for utilities customers to pay their bills in person during the pandemic.
- During the 2019-2020 school year, LISD filed 219 parent contributing to non-attendance cases, and 80 truant conduct cases.
- During the 2020-2021 school year, LISD has filed 7 truant conduct cases and 41 parent contributing to non-attendance cases.
- During FY 2019-2020, the court had 2,613 new case files. This includes the police department, code enforcement, animal control and court initiated cases.

PUBLIC WORKS

- Completed Phase I of the Town Branch Trail at Lockhart City Park. Work on Phase II is substantially completed.
- New aerator to improve water conditions in City Park pond has been installed and is now in service.
- Assignment of CTR solid waste collection agreement to new entity.
- Coordinated with TxDOT to lower the speed limit and place speed indicator signs and with Bluebonnet Electric to improve lighting, enhancing safety of intersection of Summerside Avenue and South Colorado Street.
- While working with TxDOT, secured a contract for the sidewalk extension at South Colorado Street and Walmart entrance to enhance pedestrian safety.
- Replaced the roof and made electrical improvements at the City Pool.
- Acquired 2,372 acres of water service area from Polonia Water Supply Company
- Worked with Caldwell County Christian Ministries to lease unused spaces at 901 Bois D'Arc Street.
- Completed construction of a 500,000-gallon elevated water storage tank at Silent Valley Road and SH 130.



- Completed booster pump station improvements at the Maple Street elevated water tower.
- Completed the 2020 Street Improvement Plan, paving portions of several streets throughout city.
- Installed drainage improvements at South Main/ State Park Road and City Line/ Clearfork Street.



- Extensive electrical upgrades at the water treatment plant were completed.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUSTICE



- Participated in the Caldwell County Hazard Mitigation Plan, which was finalized in July
- The Police Department congratulated Capt. John Roescher and Lt. Chris Knudsen in their retirement after each served for more than 30 years.
- Jesse Bell was promoted to Captain of Police. Daniel Williams and Mark Mayberry were promoted to Lieutenant. Andrew Richey and Matthew Shira were promoted to Patrol Sergeant.
- LPD in cooperation with TXDOT began participation in the STEP grant program in October of 2020. The program provides for hours to allow for specialized enforcement and outreach programs throughout the 2020-



2021 fiscal year.

- Continued to work with LISD in providing school security on all campuses in the district by providing two uniformed officers to the schools.
- Began the process of obtaining accreditation through the Texas Police Chief's Association as a "best practices" agency. The

staff worked throughout the year to continue to ensure the department met the highest standard of quality by ensuring policies, procedures and practices met those standards.

- The department continued to support the Lockhart Police Association's Blue Santa program, helping more than 300 Lockhart children.

UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Created an 800 number to provide customers with an option to make utilities payments 24/7 at no added cost.
- Established the Emergency Utility Relief Grant program using the city's allotment of Coronavirus Relief Fund from TDEM.