



2021

# PROGRESS IN THE MIDST OF RECOVERY

2021

## ANNUAL REPORT

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CITY OF  
**Lockhart**  
TEXAS

[www.lockhart-tx.org](http://www.lockhart-tx.org)

# FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Thank you for taking a few moments to read our 2021 Annual Report for the City of Lockhart. We hope to give you a sense of what we have accomplished, what we are working on, and what is on the horizon for our City.

The year 2021 entered with the hope for new beginnings and better prospects as the world gained a better grasp on the COVID-19 pandemic; but the road to recovery did not come without a hitch. In February, a historic winter storm swept throughout Texas, putting the City of Lockhart, its infrastructure, and its community to the test. As the city was blanketed in ice and snow, our City employees worked together to turn power back on, keep water flowing, and ensure our streets were safe for travel.



**Steven Lewis**  
**Lockhart City Manager**

Even with the brief setback brought on by Mother Nature, Lockhart continued to progress. Companies looking to put down roots in Central Texas, like Iron Ox, Hershey's Ice Cream, and McElroy Metal, chose Lockhart for its proximity to Austin and San Antonio, its skilled workforce, and rich history.

Families soon followed, prompting a surge in homes being built. In 2021, residential building permits issued by the City increased by 15-percent from 2020.

As interest continued to grow for Lockhart, whether it be for prospective residents or businesses, the city still stayed true to its roots. When COVID-19 protocols loosened and infection rates dropped, cherished community traditions, including the Chisholm Trail Roundup, Dia de los Muertos, and A Dickens' Christmas returned. Then, later into 2022, a new tradition will take hold of Lockhart and the rest of the state: The Texas Monthly's BBQ Fest and BBQ World's Fair; an event fit for the "Barbecue Capital of Texas."

As we look to the horizon in 2022 and see opportunity unbounded, I invite you to also look back at all we accomplished together!





# 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.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Administration.....	03
City Council.....	05
Development Services.....	06
Building Department.....	08
Economic Development.....	09
Fire Department.....	10
Library Services.....	12
Public Works/Electric Department.....	14
Public Safety and Justice.....	16
Utilities Customer Service.....	18
Finance.....	18

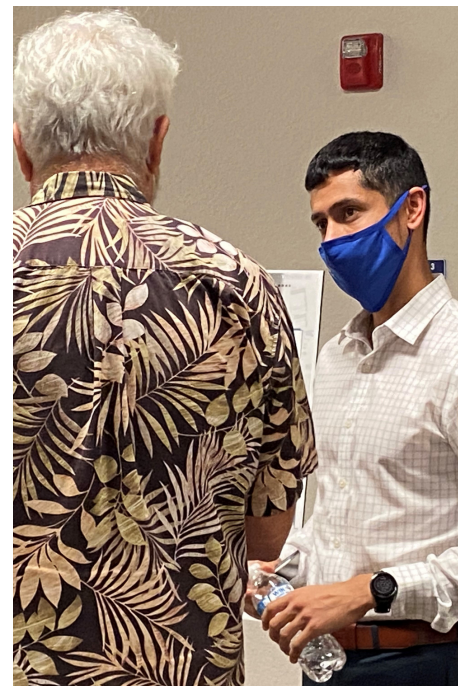


# ADMINISTRATION

- Managed Lockhart throughout Winter Storm Uri (February 11-20, 2021) that brought loss of water, multiday road closures, power outages, loss of heat, broken pipes, and other societal impacts. Continue to work with GBRA regarding the “After Action” recommendations—which will create a permanent backup system, should the main distribution pipeline lose pressure for any reason.
- Renegotiated a five-year renewal for solid waste/recycling services with CTR.
- Started planning/engineering design and public input phases of the Downtown Revitalization Project.
- Completed an operational performance review of Animal Control and Shelter Operations.
  - Reassigned Animal Services from the Public Works Department to the Police Department.
  - Adjusted shelter hours to better facilitate animal care operations and pet adoptions.
- Established the Parks and Recreation Department.
- City leadership met regularly to hear COVID-19 updates and discuss operational issues.
- Acquired new phone system in March 2021.
- Upgraded the audio/video equipment for LIVE Council meetings.
- Addressed unattended donation boxes through new city code regulations.



- Ordinance amendments to clarify and consolidate existing regulations which are applicable and effective in reducing or preventing the effects of homelessness.
- Initiated a water/wastewater utility rate study to ensure revenue sustainably funds the ongoing provision of safe and reliable water resources, while also covering the current debt obligation associated with water infrastructure improvements.
- Organized a public open house for the Downtown Revitalization Project to provide project information and gather community feedback.
  - Created a dedicated website to continue gathering feedback and provide project information to those unable to attend.
- Communications/Community Engagement:
  - Provided the public with continuous, consistent communication about COVID-19 through print, digital and virtual avenues, building and maintaining a COVID-19 webpage to provide information.
  - Updated City Council and City department supervisors through a Weekly Report on the latest developments in City administration and events in the community.
  - Published City Council “Recaps” to inform residents about items discussed and adopted in Council Meetings.
  - Expanded the City’s social media presence by creating Twitter, Instagram, and Nextdoor pages.





# CITY COUNCIL

- Entered into an intergovernmental agreement with Caldwell County for the Farmers Market.
- Formed a joint City and Lockhart ISD summer recreation program: the Lockhart Summer Teen Center.
- Engaged Bickerstaff, Heath, Delgado & Acosta, LLP of Austin to provide legal services for all aspects associated with the redistricting process in 2022.
- Approved the “Use of Public Areas” ordinance to reduce or prevent the effects of homelessness.
- Granted partial relief for 18 COVID-19 loan recipients, amounting to \$2,500 credit towards each loan.
- Formed an ad hoc committee for City Park improvements at the request of the Lockhart Chamber of Commerce.
- Approved the creation of the Courthouse Square temporary park at the corner of Market and South Commerce Sts. providing outdoor seating and public restrooms.
- Granted one-time premium pay for essential city employees who worked during the pandemic using federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).
- Provided incentives for Iron Ox’s expansion, Iron Ore, contingent on job creation and capital investment.
- Approved the sale of 13.615 acres in the SH-130 Industrial Park to Titan Development. The Albuquerque-based company provides real-estate development services, which include multifamily, office, and industrial.
- Authorized the City to enter into a Water Service Agreement with Polonia WSC to provide water services to property on 127 Old Luling Road.





# DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- The Historical Preservation Commission considered 20 Certificate for Alteration applications, one recommendation for a residential Historic Landmark designation, and Verification of Substantial Completion of exterior improvements for two historic landmarks. One Certificate for Alteration was approved administratively.
- The Zoning Board of Adjustments considered nine Zoning Variances, one Fence Variance, and one Special Exception application.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission considered nine Specific Use Permit applications, 22 Zoning Map Change applications, two requests for Fences in the minimum required front yard, one Text Amendment to Chapter 64 “Zoning”, four PDD Development Plans, 20 Subdivision Plats, and six Subdivision Variances with no plat. Three Subdivision Minor Plats were approved administratively. The Commission also Reviewed the 2020 Lockhart Comprehensive Plan to identify where updating of text and maps is needed.
- The City Council considered 21 Zoning Map Change applications, one Text Amendment to Chapter 64 “Zoning”, four PDD Development Plans, one residential Historic Landmark designation, eligibility for a Tax Abatement for exterior improvements to two historic landmarks, and one Automatic Reversion of the MH zoning classification to change the zoning to RMD. The Council also approved a Subdivision Interlocal Agreement with Caldwell County.



## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, CONT.

- The City Council accepted two Impact Fee Semi-Annual Reports from the Impact Fee Advisory Committee, and directed staff to initiate the process for updating the impact fee land use assumptions, capital improvement plans, and fees.
- The Wayfinding Committee met eight times.







# BUILDING DEPARTMENT

- Adopted the 2018 International Building Codes--involving the following: Building Code, existing Building Code, Residential Code, Plumbing Code, Fuel and Gas Code, Mechanical Code, Energy Code, Swimming Pool and Spa Code, and the 2017 National Electrical Code.
- Former Lockhart Housing Authority units on Pecos St. demolished.







# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The Lockhart EDC purchased 75-acres east of SH-130 and began development of the new industrial park.
- Hershey's Ice Cream chose Lockhart for a new distribution facility to serve central and south Texas.
- Lockhart has seen a significant increase in housing starts. Housing starts have increased by 200% compared to 2020.
- Metal roofing and building manufacturer, McElroy Metal, invests \$3.25 million in a new facility in Lockhart. This is part of an expansion of its operations by the Louisiana-based company and is the first company to locate in new I-30 industrial park.
- LEDC partnered with Titan Development to bring users to the new Lockhart Industrial Park.
- Iron Ox, a Silicon Valley-based robotic farming company, broke ground on its 535,000 square foot facility on Reed Drive.







# FIRE DEPARTMENT

- Lockhart Fire Rescue responded to 1,388 calls for service in 2021.
- Fire Station no. 2 installed a 25 KW generator purchased with a grant from the CARES Act.
- LFR purchased a LUCAS Chest Compression System designed to deliver uninterrupted compressions during CPR at a consistent rate and depth to facilitate ROSC (Return of Spontaneous Circulation). It delivers automated compressions from first response in the field to ambulance transport and through delivery to the hospital.
- Lockhart Fire Rescue received a \$20,000 Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assistance Program cost share reimbursement grant from the Texas A&M Forest Service. The grant was for used to purchase Wildland Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and a commercial washer/extractor for Fire Station no. 2 to clean PPE.
- Purchased two new state-of-the-art Scott brand Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) to place into service and a new Thermal Imaging Camera for Engine 1 was purchased and placed into service.
- Fire Chief Jenkins served on Lockhart I.S.D.'s Safety Task Force and Career and Technical Education Committee to enhance the safety and education of children in our community. He also served on the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) Homeland Security Task Force, which develops programs to assist in overall preparedness of our region.



## FIRE DEPARTMENT, CONT.

- A push-in ceremony was held at Fire Station no. 1 for a new 2021 Pierce custom fire pumper. The new pumper is deployed to respond to structure fires, vehicle fires, medical calls, wrecks, etc., and it replaced Engine 4, a 2010 Pierce, as the front-line pumper at Fire Station No. 1.
  - Engine 4 will be utilized as the primary reserve pumper for Fire Station Nos. 1/2.
  - The cost of the pumper fire apparatus is approximately \$600,000.
- The Lockhart Post-Register recognized Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Bergerson as 2021 Firefighter of the Year for Caldwell County.







# LIBRARY SERVICES

- The Dr. Eugene Clark hosted Family Movie Night outdoors, in front of the Clark Building, in July. The event featured a juggler, and the movie, Zootopia, with popcorn and drinks provided by library staff. South Main St. was closed for the duration of the event to allow families to safely enjoy the show.
- The Lockhart community came together and loaned its prized historical collection to the library's Lockhart Remembered Exhibition. The exhibit highlighted Lockhart's history and culture through photographs, memorabilia, and personal stories.
- The library hosted two events celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month:
  - It kicked off with an Art Show featuring the work of our local artists: Adrian Gutierrez, Julian Moreno, and Clemente Guzman. Their artwork was displayed in the library throughout the month of September.
  - The library also held a Virtual Living Museum on its YouTube page where library staff portrayed various Hispanic historical figures.
- Library patrons learned how to make eggrolls when the library hosted a cooking class, Cooking in the Library with Nora and Andrew.
- Dr. Eugene Clark's portrait was restored, thanks to a generous donation from a Lockhart resident and library supporter. The restored portrait is now back on display in the Clark building.
- Friends of the Dr. Eugene Clark Library members helped provide prizes and awards for the virtual Summer Reading Club.



## LIBRARY SERVICES, CONT.

- The library hosted an Anime Party where participants dressed as their favorite Anime character.
- The library's window display on this year's summer reading program, Tails and Tales, was featured by the Texas State Library and Archives commission.
- The Dickens Christmas Reverse Parade rolled through town again, in place of the traditional parade. It had more participants than the previous year. A Dickens Christmas in Lockhart was dedicated in memory of Elizabeth "Liz" Wales.
- To keep students reading during the winter break, the library launched a Winter Reading Challenge. Students picked up reading logs to record reading activities. Prizes were awarded to students who took on the challenge.







# PUBLIC WORKS & ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT

- Constructed and fully equipped a dog park at City Park.
- South Colorado St. Sidewalk Extension completed.
- Resurfaced 12 city streets as part of the Street Improvement Project.
- Monitored Maple Street construction from City Line to Mockingbird Ln.
- Increased cemetery fees to help with increasing maintenance and administrative costs. Fees have not been adjusted since 1999.
- Expanded tree trimming program to minimize power outages and improve public safety in severe weather conditions.
- Finished Phase II of the Town Branch Trail at Lockhart City Park.
- Replaced 602 water meters in the past three years, along with the replacement of the production meter at the water plant has resulted in reducing the City's water loss to 5-percent.
- Worked with volunteers and LCRA to make landscaping improvements and created a trail to a new Meet-n-Greet area at the Animal Shelter
- Completed 2021 Street Improvement Plan.
- Entered lease for downtown park on the corner of Market and Commerce Streets. Crew upgraded landscaping, added lighting, and installed a new trailer-mounted public restroom.
- Replaced powerlines along Blackjack St. from Main St. to the Golden Age Nursing Home to prepare for the upcoming Poco Loco convenience store.



## PUBLIC WORKS & ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT, CONT.

- LK 30 and LK 40 station projects commence after two-year delay due to COVID-19.
- Made security upgrades at the skate park.
- Coordinated the 4th of July Fireworks Extravaganza at the Courthouse Square and provided \$16,500 worth of fireworks.
- During Winter Storm Uri, staff was all hands-on deck. Staff responded to approximately 200 calls. Since the storm, the Water Department has worked with GBRA to increase resiliency at the Water Plant.
- The pool filtration system has been replaced at the City Pool.
- Renewed lease with Lockhart Little League for the Sports Complex.
- Held two successful cleanups at the Lockhart Cemetery.
- Held Hazardous Household Waste Dropoff at City Park.
- Completed American Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (AWIA) Risk and Resilience Assessment and Emergency Response Plan.
- Finished EPA Section (319) grant from TCEQ . 3-year grant to improved riparian function along Town Branch Creek which included the installation of a rain garden at City Park.
- Worked with the Plum Creek Watershed and KLB to hold Keep Lockhart Beautiful Cleanup event.







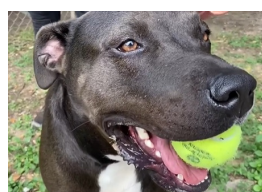
# PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUSTICE

- The Municipal Court's total number of citations filed for FY 2020-2021 was 2,240.
- The school district filed 31 truant conduct cases and 50 parent contributing to non-attendance cases for the school year 2020-2021.
- So far, for the 2021-2022 school year, the school district has filed seven truant conduct cases and 13 parent contributing cases.
- Continued to handle utility payments and the Justified Automated Collection Kiosk (J.A.C.K.) machine was installed in the drive through.
- Police patrol unit participated in additional de-escalation training with the Texas Municipal Police Association.
- The Lockhart Police Department prepared for and applied to be recognized in the Texas Police Chief's Association's Recognition Program by the end of 2021. The Recognition Program consists of 166 Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices. These best practices assist agencies in the efficient and effective delivery of service, the reduction of risk and the protection of individual's rights.
- Adopted a new police officer promotional system. The new system is conducted in three phases: 1) a written exam, 2) a one-on-one structured interview with Chief Pedraza, and 3) an assessment center. Scores from all three phases will be combined to determine the candidates final score and ranking for promotions.



## PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE, CONT.

- Continued partnership with TxDOT and continued the (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) S.T.E.P. program to address traffic issues and DWI enforcement in the city of Lockhart.
- The department applied for a Body Worn Camera grant through the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office Criminal Justice Division. The funds will be used to replace 31 Body Worn Cameras for all the LPD Officers.
- LPD conducted a complete overhaul of the evidence room. LPD was able to clear out approximately 7000 items and conducted a 100% audit with no errors. LPD also hired a full-time evidence technician to manage the evidence room.
- Replaced the 9-1-1 recording system and added an auto attendant to the phone system to better direct citizens to the appropriate services.
- LPD was requested to take over management of the Lockhart Animal Shelter and transited over during quarter 4 of 2021. A Sergeant was selected to supervise Shelter operations. LPD began to implement suggested improvements to the shelter from the 2021 consultant report conducted on the animal shelter and animal control operations.
- Through the Texas LESO program, LPD obtained a Polaris Razor at no cost to citizens. The vehicle was developed as a rescue response vehicle to help serve in situations that a patrol car cannot reach.







# UTILITIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Initiated a water/wastewater utility rate study to ensure revenue sustainably funds the ongoing provision of safe and reliable water resources, while also covering the current debt obligation associated with water infrastructure improvements.
- Negotiated new rates with Central Texas Refuse for solid waste collection and recycling rates and implemented a decrease in costs for customers.

# FINANCE

- Engaged a new external auditing firm, BrooksWatson LLP to a 3-year contract.
- Received a "clean audit" opinion in FY 2019-2020, which is an indication that the city's financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects and conform to generally accepted accounting principles.
- Received the GFOA Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for our Annual Financial Report for the second consecutive year.
- Received the first installment of the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act in the amount of \$1,750,979. The second installment will be distributed 12-month from receipt; 08/20/2021.
- Migration to the latest version of Tyler Technologies Incode Software. Incode is the current software program that runs the City of Lockhart's financials, personnel management, utilities, court, building permits, and fixed assets. The migration will allow the City of Lockhart to provide easy access to utility customers' accounts via the web; allow employees access to online personnel management; monitor fixed assets and capital projects.