

The background is a collage of historical images from Lockhart, Texas. At the top, vintage cars are parked in front of a building with a sign for 'KAWAN'S PHARMACEUTICALS | 801'. Below this, on the left, is a street view of the 'WORTH THEATRE'. On the right is a large sign for the 'H.W. Peak HOTEL'. At the bottom, a vintage truck is shown in front of a large sign for 'DRY CLIMATE CIGARS'.

CITY OF

Lockhart

TEXAS

2024 Annual REPORT

**PREPARED BY
CITY OF LOCKHART
STAFF**

FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Steve Lewis



It doesn't take much to notice the rapid growth that's happening here in Lockhart. For many, it is both exciting and challenging to see our community evolve. With new families, businesses, and opportunities flowing into Lockhart, we find ourselves at the crossroads of progress and preservation.

We are committed to ensuring that as our population grows, so does the quality of life for every resident, both current and future. In response to this growth, we have been working diligently to plan and implement strategies that will allow Lockhart to thrive. This annual report provides a brief summary of many accomplishments in 2024.

Infrastructure Improvements:

To keep pace with our growing community, we are enhancing our infrastructure to support the increased demand. From expanding our water and sewer systems to improving our roadways and public transportation options, we are focused on building a foundation that will serve us for generations to come.

Economic Development:

Lockhart's economic potential is vast, and we are fostering a climate that attracts new businesses while supporting our local entrepreneurs. Through strategic initiatives and policies, we aim to diversify our economy, bringing jobs and innovative opportunities to our community.

Housing and Community Planning:

As more people call Lockhart home, we are working to ensure that housing remains accessible to all. As noted in our Comprehensive Plan of 2024, it is our goal to prioritize affordable housing developments and enhanced building standards, boost social resilience, promote housing stability, equitable access, and community well-being. This will ensure that Lockhart remains a place where people can truly prosper.

Community Engagement:

As we continue to grow, your input is invaluable. We are dedicated to fostering a transparent and open dialogue between the city government and the people of Lockhart. Whether it's...

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FROM THE CITY MANAGER

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city council meetings, surveys, or social media, we want to hear your thoughts and ideas as we move forward together.

We are confident that by planning carefully and working collaboratively, we can ensure that our city remains a wonderful place, consistent with our history, culture, and unique character.

Respectfully,

Steve Lewis

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LOCKHART CITY COUNCIL



Back (L-R): Councilmember at-large Brad Westmoreland, District 1 Councilmember Juan Mendoza, District 4 Councilmember Jeffry Michelson, District 2 Councilmember John Castillo

Front (L-R): Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez, Mayor Lew White, District 3 Councilmember John Lairsen

ADMINISTRATION

- Hired a Building Official, Economic Development Director, Finance Director, and Public Information Officer in 2024.
- Provided assistance in the dissemination of information regarding the Downtown Revitalization Project, the 2024 Comprehensive Plan, public safety concerns, and City events.
- Facilitated the return of the Texas Monthly BBQ Fest for a third year and executed event promotions through digital storytelling, print ads, travel articles and periodic social media posts.
- Worked with CARTS to successfully expand service area in Lockhart.



CITY COUNCIL

- Adopted an administrative procedure for candidate nominations to City Boards and Commissions.
- Council awarded a bid to DeNucci Construction LLC for the Downtown Revitalization Project. The approximately \$10.2 million project focuses on improvements to water/wastewater/drainage infrastructure in the downtown area and resurface the downtown streets. The project also includes lighting and electric improvements, road reconstruction, sidewalk improvements, safety improvements for pedestrians and motorists, as well as landscape irrigation.
- Members were appointed to the Animal Shelter Advisory Board.
- Approved an Economic Development Incentive Agreement with Lockhart Hospitality, LLC clearing the way for a Holiday Inn Express.
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CITY COUNCIL

- Approved the Event Sponsorship Agreement with Texas Monthly to hold the Texas Monthly BBQ Fest at the Courthouse Square for the BBQ World's Fair and City Park for the Top 50 Picnic for the third year of the event.
- Approved a resolution declaring intent to seek certification from the International Dark Sky Association and to regulate outdoor lighting in accordance with the Texas Local Government Code.
- Approved an ordinance prohibiting registered sex offenders from loitering within 2,000 feet of a Child Safety Zone.
- Approved the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) Advisory Board's proposed funding allocation of \$222,500 for FYE 2024 to provide funding for community applicants.
- Approved a Professional Services Agreement with Masonwood Development Group. This agreement states that the developer will cover the City's costs for engineering and legal reviews of their proposed residential development. The project is planned for 156 acres west of city limits, south of Borchert Loop, and north of Maple Street/Boggy Creek.



CITY COUNCIL

- Approved amendments to the zoning chapter of Lockhart's Code of Ordinances. The amendments to the zoning code clarify definitions for numerous land uses and other terms. The amendment also includes new important land uses that were not previously included in the zoning ordinance.
- Passed an amended interlocal agreement with CARTS, the public transportation system that services rural communities in Central Texas, including Lockhart. As ridership increases and potential investment of a multi-modal station in Lockhart is discussed, the Lockhart City Council agreed to extend its interlocal agreement to September 2025 and contribute \$30,000 annually for this service.
- As requested by TxDOT, adoption of the proposed designs of the Gateway Monument and Wayfinding signage as depicted in the 2022 Wayfinding Master Plan were authorized by City Council.
- Passed a Chapter 312 policy, which allows Lockhart to offer full or partial tax exemption for new investments for a period not to exceed ten years. City Council will need to revisit the policy every two years.
- Approved a resolution acknowledging the passage of the Lockhart Freedom Act and its incorporation into the City Charter, while also acknowledging that state law prohibits cities from not fully enforcing drug laws, including those related to low-level cannabis enforcement. City Council ordered a special election in 2024 after receiving a citizen-initiated petition to amend the City Charter section regarding marijuana enforcement by city personnel.
- Drafted two new ordinances limiting each household within city limits to five pets and establishing a microchip requirement for pets.



DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

- Fifty-three (53) acres at 1925 FM 2001 were zoned as a Planned Development District to develop an industrial park anchored by RealCold Storage's facility.
- The City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) was expanded by approximately 88 acres at the Juniper Springs subdivision, located to the west of the City Limits south of SH 142 and north and east of Borchert Loop.



RealCold Facility under construction
September 2024

Several zoning codes were updated, including:

- Enhanced residential and commercial lighting standards.
- Amended noise ordinance affecting commercial properties.
- Amended building height in Commercial Heavy Business (CHB) zoning district and new parking standards for hotels.
- Added comprehensive list of land use definitions to the zoning ordinance while assigning several new land uses to the city's zoning districts.
- The 2024 Comprehensive Plan, Lockhart Looking Forward was adopted. This is the City's first adopted comprehensive plan since the year 2000.
- The Seawillow Master Planned Community Development Agreement approved, and Public Improvement District was created.
- Annexed nearly 85 acres at the intersection of FM 1322 and Centerpoint Rd, located in the Seawillow District.
- Nine (9) zoning cases were initiated.
- Six (6) variance cases heard at Zoning Board of Adjustment.
- Ten (10) Specific Use Permit cases were heard.
- 14 Certificates for Alteration were heard.
- 19 subdivision plats were approved.
- One right-of-way was abandoned.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Inspections Division

More than 580 building permits were issued, including:

- 253 new single family residential building permits.
- Nine new commercial building permits to include industrial, retail, professional and educational projects.
- Established new partnership with My Government Online permitting software, to be installed in 2025. The software will streamline the permitting and inspection process for both residents and city staff. Citizens will be able to apply for, pay for, and manage permits and inspections online. It can also be used to track the status of permits and applications, and to schedule inspections.
- Expansion of Development Services staff including new Building Official, Health & Code Enforcement Officer, and Development Services Assistant.



Amherst modular home, September 2024



Ziegenfelder Plant, September 2024

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Holiday Inn Express announced plans to build a 90-room, \$10 million hotel with meeting space.
- Popular TV show “1923” transformed downtown Lockhart for a few days of filming for Season 2.
- Hill Country Foodworks expanded into a 49,000 square foot space to accommodate their growing warehouse needs.
- Lockhart EDC staff met with State Representative Stan Gerdes and State Senator Zaffirini to discuss SH 130 and incentive programs.
- AAA Countertops to consolidate into advanced 65,000 square foot facility near Lockhart with purchase of 15 acres of land. The company plans to open in 2026.
- Ziegenfelder and Real Cold Industrial Projects continue construction, on time and set to open in 2025.
- Lone Star Logistics Center announced it is adding 127 acres adjacent to Real Cold for new industrial development.
- The Lockhart Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) proposed a Targeted Retail and Grocery Economic Development Policy to predetermine incentive policies. The policy, approved by Council, will offer incentives to attract retailers, specifically quick service restaurants, to Lockhart. Businesses must be new to the area, more than \$5 million in sales the first year, and have a space of at least 3,000 square feet.



LIBRARY SERVICES

- Evening with the Authors was hosted at the Library, with six participating authors.
- Representatives of the Evening with the Authors program presented the City with a \$10,000 donation to be used for general library programs.
- During the April 2024 Solar Eclipse, the Library and Texas Parks and Wildlife held educational activity sessions and provided solar viewing glasses to participants.
- Library staff attended handed out pencil bags, library cards and flyers at the 4:12 Kids Back to School Event.
- Library staff attended the LISD Convocation at Lockhart High School and handed out school supplies.
- Remember and Honor Tribute Ceremony was held at the Library, featuring Louis Amaya as the guest speaker and a live performance of “Taps.”
- An arts sale benefit was held at the Library with local artists’ photographs displayed. \$1,200 were raised for the Library.
- Planned and hosted the Christmas to Remember in downtown Lockhart, with activities and entertainment inside the Library.



PARKS & RECREATION

- Council approved a recommendation from the Lockhart Parks Advisory Board to select the site located at San Jacinto St. and Center St. for a future municipal aquatic facility.
- A Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update was adopted.
- Applied for and secured a \$750,000 Texas Parks & Wildlife Grant for the new Aquatics Facility Project.
- Converted one basketball court to a soccer mini pitch at LaFleur Soccer Complex in partnership with Lockhart ISD, ATX Soccer, and St. David's Foundation.
- LCRA volunteers repainted the restroom and picnic structures at Pecos Park for LCRA Steps Forward Day.



PARKS & RECREATION

- Aerator fountain and lights at City Park Pond were replaced.
- Memorial Burial Park storage shed was rebuilt.
- More than 150 children participated in the annual Kidfish event at City Park.
- Partnered with Keep Lockhart Beautiful to provide two park cleanup events.
- Assisted residents with 106 park pavilion rentals and 40 pool parties at City Pool.
- Provided fireworks for the Lockhart Chamber of Commerce 4th of July Fireworks Extravaganza, which is co-sponsored by the City of Lockhart.
- Hosted three Movies in the Park events.
- Provided facility and logistics support for Lockhart ISD cross country meets, Chisholm Trail Roundup, and the annual Texas Monthly BBQ Fest.



PUBLIC WORKS & ELECTRIC

- TRC Engineering and City staff completed the U.S. EPA Lead and Copper Rule Revision Implementation Plan and service line inventory.
- Officials from Rise Broadband provided a presentation regarding residential and non-residential high-speed fiber internet and digital services provided by the company. The presentation reviewed the communications plan for upcoming installation work with City Staff and residents, the construction process, and service costs dependent on connection speed.
- The Downtown Revitalization Project broke ground September 2024. Construction is anticipated to be complete by Summer 2026.
- Water Variance was granted by TCEQ for an Alternative Capacity Exemption for Pumping Capacity requirement per utility connection.
- High Service Pump (HSP) and generator project at the Lockhart Water Treatment Plant was completed in Summer of 2024. The addition of HSPs will increase supply and pumping capacity.
- Water and Wastewater Master Plan was adopted August 2024. The Master Plan provides an outline and system model for short-term and long-term water/wastewater planning and projects for the City.
- City secured the 2021-2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) of \$350,000. The grant helped replace 954 residential water meters across the city.



PUBLIC WORKS & ELECTRIC

- The San Jacinto Elevated Storage Tank was painted and repaired.
- The City entered into an Advance Funding Agreement (AFA) with TxDOT to widen SH142 to include a center turning lane and signal improvements. The improvements are in the 60% design phase. Construction is anticipated to begin in late 2025 to early 2026.
- Truck re-route signs were installed by TxDOT along SH 130, from SH 142 to U.S. 183, and the adopted ordinance was initiated March 2024.
- The City entered into an Advance Funding Agreement (AFA) with TxDOT for Wildlife Fencing Safety Improvements at the Lockhart Municipal Airport. The improvements are anticipated to cost approximately \$1,350,000, with completion of the project occurring in 2026.
- Purchased and installed a new lighted Christmas tree for the downtown Square.
- A feasibility study regarding establishing a Railroad Quiet Zone is nearing completion. City staff and TRC are currently working with the Federal Railroad Administration regarding this application.

Electric

- Completed a powerline rebuild on Willow St., from N. Blanco to N. Pecos St.
- Rebuilt approximately 3,200 feet of powerline beginning at Pecos St/Willow St. north of FM 2001, as part of an agreement with Techline Construction, LLC.
- Replaced a high voltage line on Navidad St., from Prairie Lea to Magnolia St.
- Contracted McCoy's Tree Trimmers for the annual tree trimming project.



PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE



Police

- Seven officers hired while continuing recruitment and retention efforts.
- Two Sergeants promoted to Lieutenants.
- Awarded a \$30,000 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) through CAPCOG to replace officers' laptops in their vehicle units.
- Awarded an \$18,000 grant from the Texas Governor's Office to purchase ballistic shields.
- Hosted a successful Coffee with a Cop event with Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union.
- Formed a Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), comprised of a mental health counselor from Bluebonnet Trails as well as the Lockhart Police Victim Assistance Team. The HOT will transition to the Caldwell County Homeless Coalition.
- Hosted Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) active shooter training for area officers.
- Animal Shelter Advisory Board was created after receiving approval from Lockhart City Council.
- Published the 2023 Racial Profiling Report for Lockhart Police.



PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE

- Participated in National Night Out in six local neighborhoods, as well as Lockhart High School.
- Council awarded Connolly Architects a design contract to provide architectural services for the Lockhart Animal Shelter. Upgrades could include adding concrete flooring and drainage in several areas and replacing chain link divider walls with cinderblock walls.
- Created a new surgical suite at the Lockhart Animal Shelter, thanks to a \$15,000 donation from the Lockhart Animal Foundation. The surgical suite will be used for spaying and neutering procedures.



Municipal Court

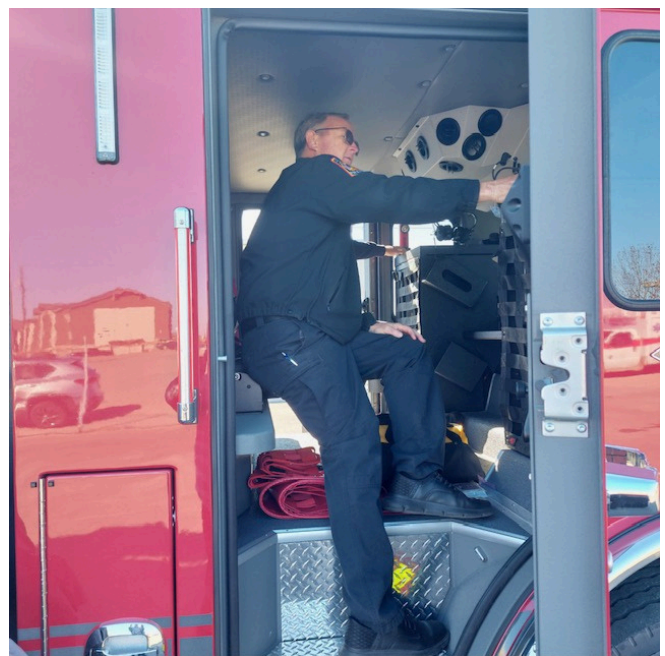
- 2,182 new cases filed in FY 23-24.
- 228 cases were filed by Animal Control.
- 114 cases were filed by Lockhart ISD, including 84 parent contributing to nonattendance and 29 truant conduct cases.
- The City Attorney's Office assigned a new City prosecutor to the Municipal Court.

Fire

- Responded to 1,824 service calls.
- Obtained 29 state certifications from the Texas Commission on Fire Protection (TCFP). Certifications included Driver/Operator, Aerial Operator, Fire Officer, Fire Instructor, Fire Investigator, Wildland, Hazardous Materials, Incident Commander, and Fire Marshal.

PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE

- Fire Chief served on the Lockhart ISD Safety Task Force and the Career and Technical Education Committee to enhance the safety and education of children in our community.
- 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 additional shift firefighter positions were added bringing up the total to 15.
- Three new Driver/Engineer positions from existing firefighter positions were added in October. The additions will assist in the staffing of the new aerial fire apparatus.



PUBLIC SAFETY & JUSTICE

- Lockhart Fire Rescue received its new Quint aerial fire apparatus in December. A Quint is an apparatus which serves the dual purpose of an engine and a ladder truck.
- The proposal from Studio Steinbomer to provide architectural services and to support the remodel of Fire Station No. 1, 201 W. Market, was passed. Council members also approved authorizing the contract for Construction-Manager-at-Risk (CMAR) services to D. Wilson Construction Co, for the fire station remodeling project.
- City Council approved an agreement to sell City of Lockhart EMS equipment to Caldwell County Emergency Services District (ESD) No. 5. Under the agreement, the City sold Lockhart EMS vehicles/ambulances and equipment, including ventilators, medical equipment, radios, and computers.





FINANCE

- Assisted the City’s external financial auditor BrooksWatson with the FY 2022-2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.
- Water and wastewater rates adjusted based on recommendations from Raftelis, the City's utility rate consultant. The first round of rate changes began in November 2024.
- BrooksWatson was reappointed as the City’s external financial auditor.
- City Council designated First Lockhart National Bank as the City’s depository bank following receipt of proposals from banking institutions.
- City Council passed the final obligation of ARPA funds. \$1.4 million of remaining ARPA funds will be allocated towards future capital projects, at the recommendation of the Finance Department.

IN OUR COMMUNITY...

- Voters in the Lockhart Independent School District (LISD) territory approved a ballot measure to join the Austin Community College District (ACC), offering residents access to higher education with in-district benefits.
- ACC purchased the historic Ford building, establishing a presence in the community.

AWARDS + RECOGNITIONS

- Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Bergerson attended year two of the Texas Fire Chief's Association (TFCA) "Fire Chief's Academy". Bergerson earned the designation as a Certified Fire Executive.
- Dispatch Excellence Award from the Texas Department of Health and Human Services: Jerome Wymore, Dispatcher at Lockhart PD
- Richard R. Lillie Planning Excellence Award from the American Planning Association – Texas Chapter: Planning Department
- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada: Finance Department.
- Evan Olszewski earned American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification.
- Kevin Waller earned American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) certification.
- Holly Malish earned Certified Economic Developer Designation (CEcD) from the International Economic Development Council