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ANNUAL REPORT

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# From the City Manager



**Steve Lewis**

As we ease into a new year, uncertainty is high and there are challenges aplenty. After two years living through the height of a global pandemic, the Lockhart community and its leadership strove to understand the unknowns brought on by COVID-19 in terms of human health, way of life, and economic impact. Then, in 2022, the community regained its footing with new economic activity. At the current rate, Lockhart anticipates rapid growth well into 2030 and, as community leaders and residents, it is in our best interest to prepare.

Texas' population now tops 30 million, according to recent estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. In fact, the state added 470,708 people (measured from July 2021 to July 2022), the largest gaining state in the nation. Lockhart, though in a smaller scale, also experienced that growth with nearly 15,000 calling our community home and counting—an 11.4% population increase over the past decade. People choosing to move to Texas reflects a range of factors, from the dynamic economy to greater affordability. The very same reasons many prospective residents are moving to communities like Lockhart.

Accommodating the substantial population expansion expected in the decades to come will require investing in infrastructure of all types: roads, broadband, electric distribution, and utility systems. The City aims to guide that through a new Comprehensive Plan, revising impact fees to ensure growth pays for growth, preparing a five-year power system study to ensure a reliable electric distribution system is maintained, and increasing water/wastewater capacities. The key is to try to get ahead of, or at least stay with, the increases to avoid eroding quality of life for all.

Investing in infrastructure will, not only allow the City to preserve—even improve—quality of life, but also give Lockhart a competitive edge in attracting companies and quality jobs into the community. Most recently, the Lockhart Economic Development Corporation (LEDC) won a \$1.68 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to upsize the wastewater line from Lockhart Industrial Park III on SH 130 to better serve west Lockhart. Projects like this one show prospective businesses that Lockhart has the foresight to prepare for upcoming growth and demand,



# From the City Manager, cont.

especially being situated in the Austin-San Antonio corridor. In the past year, several companies, including the Ziegenfelder Company, Titan Development, Mill Scale LLC, and McElroy Metal chose to expand its operations in the city, fulfilling the LEDC's Target Industries Strategy for Food and Beverage Processing, and Metal Manufacturing with the promise of more job opportunities.

**It has been said that making the right decision today leads to the right things tomorrow.**

Our Mayor and City Council, along with the numerous volunteers on appointed boards and commissions, and City Staff, are focused on promoting the City's future, creating a positive community legacy, and striving for economic viability.

Here's to another successful year as we look back on what we have achieved together!



# City Council

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Administration	5
City Council	6
Development Services	8
Economic Development	9
Library Services	10
Parks and Recreation	11
Public Works/Electric Department	13
Public Safety and Justice	15
Finance	17



(Front L-R): Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzalez-Sanchez, Mayor Lew White, District 3 Councilmember Kara McGregor.

(Back L-R): Councilmember At-Large Brad Westmoreland, District 1 Councilmember Juan Mendoza, District 2 Councilmember David Bryant, District 4 Councilmember Jeffry Michelson



# Administration

- Recruitment of an Assistant City Manager position is ongoing.
- Executed a lease agreement for additional administrative office space at 105 S. Colorado St. to improve customer and employee spaces, functionality, and accessibility at both the new office building and Lockhart City Hall.
- Recruited and hired two senior leadership roles (Park Director and Senior Planner) and a Code Enforcement Officer.
- Transitioned to a new City Engineer from within the City's consulting engineering firm.
- Conducted the second Downtown Revitalization Project public open house, which ultimately led to the project's Final Conceptual Design, moving the project forward to the Design Phase. This led to individual stakeholder meetings at the 30% Design Phase for downtown businesses and property owners whose operations will be directly impacted by the Downtown Revitalization Project.
- Streamlined Citizen Board and Commission appointment process by requiring Councilmembers' nominations to be submitted to the City Secretary at least seven days prior to the scheduled City Council meeting, when the nomination will be considered.
- Revised the City's COVID-19 guidelines closely resembling the updated CDC guidelines, which lifted the requirement to quarantine if exposed to the virus, deemphasizes screening people with no symptoms, and eliminating a recommendation for test-to-stay after a potential exposure.
- Coordinated community communication plan regarding a new solid waste collection schedule with the City's solid waste collection contractor, Central Texas Refuse (CTR).



# City Council

- City Council conducted a strategic planning session to create strategic priorities for 2022-2023. The Council established goals in the following areas: City facilities, Human Resources/Staffing, Parks and Recreation, Infrastructure, Modernization and Communications, Development and Quality of Life, and Revenue Sustainability.
- Adopted a redistricting plan prepared after additional discussions with community members and the City's special counsel on redistricting.
  - Every ten years, the City is required to redistrict based on the most recent census--in this case, the 2020 Census--to remain in compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act.
- Adopted a Code of Ethics and Anti-Discrimination Policy for City Council, and Boards and Commissions members.
- Annexed 89.8 acres on the east side of FM 1322 and approximately 2600 feet south of Seawillow Rd.
- Accepted the Wayfinding Committee's final report regarding a system of signage for city gateways and directional/interpretive signage for both pedestrian and vehicular wayfinding.
- Adopted the Lockhart Municipal Airport's first Minimum Airport Standards, which will establish minimum requirements on conducting commercial operations, insurance requirements, building improvement standards, leasing, and application process to conduct business.
- Continued existing juvenile curfew ordinance requirements as required by Texas law every three years.
- Authorized a one-year agreement with Community Action, Inc. for the Low-Income Water Assistance Program helping eligible low-income households pay for water, storm water, and sewer services.

# City Council, cont.

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- Approved an additional School Resource Officer for Lockhart ISD to enhance school safety.
- Appointed a new Municipal Court Judge.
- Approved Texas Monthly's request to relocate its annual BBQ Fest to Lockhart from Austin.
- Accepted two Impact Fee Semi-Annual Reports from the Impact Fee Advisory Committee
- Accepted the Final Report from the Wayfinding Committee.
- Participated in Chisholm Trail Roundup and A Christmas to Remember in Lockhart parades.





# Development Services

- Drafted mural regulation standards and guidelines, which include the definition of murals, specifies the locations and content where murals are permitted, and would prohibit murals within the Courthouse Square Historical District.
- Issued a Certificate of Occupancy for McElroy Metal at SH 130 Industrial Park.
- The Historical Preservation Commission considered 14 Certificate for Alteration applications, and recommended Text Amendments to Chapter 28 “Historical Districts and Landmarks” and Chapter 46 “Signs”. No Certificate for Alteration applications were approved administratively.
- The Zoning Board of Adjustment considered no Zoning Variance applications, one Sign Variance application, and four Special Exception applications.
- The Planning and Zoning Commission considered 17 Specific Use Permit applications, 31 Zoning Map Change applications, four Text Amendments to Chapter 64 “Zoning”, one Determination of Appropriate Zoning, two PDD Development Plans, 19 Subdivision Plats, one Development Plat, and four Subdivision Variances with no plat. Fifteen Minor Subdivision Plats were approved administratively.



# Economic Development

- Ziegenfelder Company, the nation's largest producer of Twin Pops, chose to expand its operations in Lockhart.
- Titan Development, a leading Southwest real estate development and investment firm, begins development of its first speculative building in Lockhart Industrial Park III.
- Won a \$1.68 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to upsize the wastewater line from the new industrial park on SH 130 to help facilitate the expected growth on the west side of Lockhart.
- Mill Scale, LLC chose Lockhart to expand its barbecue pit manufacturing and headquarters operations.
- McElroy Metal began operations in the 130 Industrial Park.
- Recognized by the Texas Economic Development Council with the 2021 Economic Excellence Award for a second time.



# Library Services

- Hosted Community Action Inc. to assist citizens in need of financial assistance with their utility bill.
- Evening with the Authors returned in-person after two years held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- With the Greater Caldwell County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the library co-hosted the Mexican Consulate, Pablo Marentes, and his wife, Patricia Lerdo de Tejada.
- Friends of the Library's Book Sale raised \$6,000.
- Co-hosted a book fair with the Caldwell County Retired Teachers Association.
- Assisted in renaming *A Dickens Christmas* to *A Christmas to Remember in Lockhart*. The name change opened the doors for other community organizations to have a more active role in planning celebrations.
- Hosted in-person library luncheons.
- Library Easter Bunny visited all Lockhart ISD elementary schools.
- Participated in Lockhart ISD's Trunk or Treat at Navarro Elementary.





# Parks & Recreation

- Upgraded the City's Splash Pad with a blue, non-slip and waterproof coating to enhance the facility's appearance and safety.
- Supported Keep Lockhart Beautiful's Summer Mural Program by providing paint and materials costs for a wrap-around mural to beautify the Lions Park restrooms.
- Partnered with Keep Lockhart Beautiful
- Continued partnership with Lockhart ISD for the Lockhart Summer Teen Center's second year..
- Assisted residents with 85 rentals for park pavilions and 46 pool party reservations at City Pool.
- City Pool building repainted by LCRA volunteers for LCRA Steps Forward Day.
- Provided fireworks for the Lockhart Chamber of Commerce's 4th of July Fireworks Extravaganza.
- Selected a contractor to renovate basketball courts at Nueces Park and Pecos Park to include basketball and pickleball markings.
- Removed seven dead trees at City Cemetery and trimmed 25 additional trees.
- Replaced safety mulch at all city playground structures.
- Replaced fencing at Arredondo Park.
- Painted bridges at Lions Park.
- Sent out a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a consultant who will manage the park renovation projects. Each city-owned park will have upgrades and renovations planned for the upcoming year.
- Formed an Aquatics Facility Committee to begin the planning process for the construction of a new swimming pool facility.

# Parks & Recreation, cont.

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- Selected a contractor to build a new splash pad at Maple Park, which is expected to be ready by Summer 2023.
- Identified the following needed repairs to the Little League Complex prior to next season:
  - Fence repairs
  - Foul ball netting
  - Door replacement
  - Light replacement
- Provided facility support for Lockhart ISD's Cross Country meets, Chisholm Trail Roundup, Hill Country Cookoff, and Texas Monthly BBQ Fest.
- Showed four films for Movies in the Park: *Encanto*, *Spiderman: No Way Home*, *Jungle Cruise*, and *The Book of Life*.





# Public Works & Electric

- The FM 20 wastewater plant had its return activated sludge pumps, sludge belt press, and conveyor system rehabbed by GBRA.
- The Water Plant had its isolation valves on the raw water transmission lines replaced, along with high service pumps 1 and 2 and the piping and valves between the accelerators and flow splitter box.
- Contributed to the Downtown Revitalization Project's 30% Design Phase plans.
- A new roof was installed on the Water Plant Building and rehabilitation was performed on the water plant's two-million-gallon storage tank.
- TRC Engineering completed the design of the High Service Pumps and Emergency Generators project at Water Plant.
- Submitted detailed SH 142 Truck Re-Route plans to TxDOT's Traffic Division for review. Plans include proposed signage for the truck route for northbound/southbound U.S. 183 and northbound/southbound SH 130.
- Identified six streets for resurfacing and limited reconstruction for the 2022 Street Improvements Project.
- Identified 3300 linear feet of deficient sidewalks and 22 ramps for rehabilitation and replacement for 2023.
- Paved the Maple St. extension, between San Jacinto and Mockingbird Sts.
- Submitted its Emergency Response Plan (ERP) in accordance with the American Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA) outlining the Water Department's strategies, resources, plans, and procedures to prepare for and respond to an incident, natural or man-made, which may threaten life, property, or the environment.

# Public Works & Electric, cont.

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- Closely monitored community water usage through weekly Water Conservation Dashboard updates during historic drought.
- Replaced the roof at the senior center and Fire Station No.1.
- Placed capital projects at the Lockhart Municipal Airport under consideration for TxDOT's Aviation Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) 2023-2025.
- Interconnection from the Carrizo Groundwater Supply Project (CGSP) to the two-million gallon Storage Tank at the Water Treatment Plant was completed. Connection scheduled to receive Carrizo Groundwater water Fall 2023.
- Completed a deceleration, right-turn lane along FM 1322 into the Summerside Subdivision.
- Completed the Electric Department's new equipment storage shed.
- Adopted the LCRA's 2023-2027 Five-year System Study.





# Public Safety & Justice

- Filed a new Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) with the Public Utilities Commission of Texas (PUCT) in response to Winter Storm Uri.
  - Conducted a tabletop emergency exercise for members of the City's police, fire, EMS, electric, public works, and City administration, along with a Texas Division of Emergency Management representative, as required by the PUCT to ensure all key safety personnel understand the City's EOP.
- Provided an additional School Resource Officer at Lockhart ISD.
- Appointed an Interim Police Chief as a statewide search for a permanent Lockhart Police Chief continues.
- Interim Police Chief met with elected officials and community leaders in an effort to continue fostering a good relationship with the public.
- Participated in Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) to ensure continued community safety.
- Reorganized Police Staff to meet immediate needs, including promotion of two interim Sergeants, and adjustment of Strength of Force to 31 sworn personnel and reallocating one vacant Lieutenant position into a patrol officer position,
- Deployed new body-worn cameras purchased using the Governor's grant funds.
- Purchased new digital cameras for patrol officers for crime scene investigations.
- Began interviews for new Animal Shelter Supervisor after previous supervisor retired.
- Entered into an Interlocal Agreement for Law Enforcement Services with the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office to supplement LPD shift shortages.

# Public Safety & Justice, cont.

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- Successfully revived National Night Out after two years in hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Hosted the City's first Public Safety fair.
- Hosted free spay/neuter clinics to help facilitate animal adoptions at the Lockhart Animal Shelter.
- Participated with Ascension Seton in recruiting Lockhart EMS' new Director.
- Purchased new battery-powered extrication tools for the Lockhart Fire Department through Firehouse Subs' Public Safety Foundation Grant.
- Purchased rescue and personal protection equipment used in swiftwater and low angle rescue incidents through the LCRA's Community Development Partnership Program grant.
- Purchased a new Frazer Type I ambulance with powered loading and cot system.
- Received Council approval for Lockhart's first-ever 75' ladder truck. It is scheduled to be completed early 2024.
- Maintained the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification of 3/3X.
- Assistant Fire Chief Ryan Bergerson named Caldwell County's Firefighter of the Year.
- Fire Chief Randy Jenkins served as a member of Lockhart ISD's Safety Task Force, Capital Area Council of Governments' (CAPCOG) Homeland Security Task Force, and as a panelist for Austin Community College's Fire Academy.
- 2,286 total violations filed at the Municipal Court for FY 2021-2022.
- Lockhart ISD filed 31 parent-contributing to non-attendance cases and 24 truant conduct cases for school year 2021-2022.



# Finance



- Received an unmodified “clean” audit opinion for FY 2021—the highest level of assurance the City can receive in its annual financial audit from the City's external financial auditor.
- Established a registration process for short-term rental units.
- Implemented energy load-shed notifications to municipally owned utility customers as required by Texas law.
- Outlined the City’s spending plan for the American Rescue Plan Act 2021 (ARPA) relief funds, which include paying for personal protective equipment and COVID-19 medical supplies, infrastructure investment, and replace lost revenue to utility funds.



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**Lockhart**  
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