

Comprehensive Plan 2001

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PUBLIC FACILITIES PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

The *Public Facilities* element of the Comprehensive Plan addresses the expectations that a community's residents have regarding public services and the facilities needed to provide these services. The *Public Facilities Plan* for Lufkin focuses on both the building space and personnel needed to provide services such as police, fire, library, administration, and so forth for the City's residents. Public buildings that house the various governmental and service functions of a municipality are generally of two types: (1) those requiring a nearly central or a common location and that serve the entire municipal area, and (2) those serving segments of the community on a "service area" basis. Lufkin's City Hall is an example of a governmental building that serves the entire community, while a fire station represents a public building that has a service area relationship with the community.

The demands for public building space at all levels of government usually increase as the population served grows and as the level of service expands. Lufkin currently has 450 municipal employees. Based upon a similar ratio, approximately 680 employees will be required when the City reaches a projected population of 50,000 (refer to the *Future Land Use Plan* element for details on population projections) in order to accommodate the essential municipal functions at the same service level that exists in Lufkin today. It

should be noted that within this *Public Facilities Plan*, a population growth rate of 2 percent has been used for planning purposes. This is consistent with the *Future Land Use Plan*, and would result in Lufkin reaching a population of almost 50,000 people by the year 2021. New and/or expanded facilities will be needed to house the additional employees and to replace existing municipal facilities as the City grows in the future.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS & FUTURE NEEDS

The public services provided by the City are divided into several separate departments; this makes it easier for Lufkin to provide adequate and efficient facilities and services, as well as to plan for the work space and personnel that is needed to administer these services. The following sections describe these various departments by outlining their current conditions and by making recommendations correlated to Lufkin's future growth potential.

### The Lufkin City Hall

The City Hall of Lufkin was initially constructed in 1986 and has a total of approximately 37,760 square feet. There are several departments that operate within City Hall, with a total of 98 employees (including part-time



personnel and police administration). The following specifically outlines these departments and their respective number of employees:

- ◆ Information Technology: 3 full-time people
- ◆ Planning: 3 people
- ◆ Purchasing: 2 people
- ◆ Main Street: 2 people
- ◆ Engineering: 10 people
- ◆ Inspection Services (Building Inspections, Code Enforcement): 9 people
- ◆ Fire Marshal: 2 people (these positions are included in Fire Department employee total)
- ◆ Accounting: 7 people
- ◆ Utility Collections: 12 full-time people, 1 part-time person
- ◆ Public Works: 2 people
- ◆ City Manager: 4 people
- ◆ City Secretary: 2 people, plus the Mayor's office
- ◆ Human Resources: 4 people
- ◆ Municipal Court: 5 people, plus a judge
- ◆ Non-City personnel working within City Hall:
  - TDHCA field office: 1 person
  - Pineywoods Home Team: 4 people
  - Credit Union: 1 person

In general, between 20 and 25 percent of the total employees of a municipality

office within the city hall facility. Currently, 22 percent of Lufkin's employees are housed at City Hall. Given this percentage, for a population of 50,000 people in Lufkin, approximately 150 employees would office within City Hall.



**ILLUSTRATION 5-1**  
**The Lufkin City Hall**

Many departments within City Hall are at maximum capacity for their respective space. Some of these departments have room for short-term expansion, and some could be moved to an annex facility or separate facility to allow for expansion of certain departments. In addition, with the Service Center relocation (discussed below), the existing City Hall space should be adequate for at least the next five years. During this time period, however, the City should initiate a detailed space study in order to ensure adequate future space for these departments. This time-frame would allow Lufkin to develop facilities that would be ready to be in operation within 10 to 15 years.



## A New Service Center Facility

A new Service Center Facility is currently being investigated for a location on Mott Street. This new facility would house some administrative staff of either the Engineering or Public Works Departments, but the primary purpose will be to provide office space for the support staff of these departments. It is anticipated that the new Service Center Facility would eventually house approximately 175 people, and construction should be complete within the next 5 years. Other departments may also have personnel operating out of this new facility, including Streets, Water, Sewer, Fleet Maintenance, and Parks & Recreation. The existing facility that houses several of these departments is likely to be sold.

## Police Service

The total number of police personnel in Lufkin is approximately 100 people, specifically 77 sworn officers and 23 civilians, who mainly provide administrative support. The total square footage within the main Police Department facility<sup>5-1</sup> is approximately 20,836 square feet. There is also a separate narcotics officers' facility, which is located south of downtown Lufkin. The Police Department is currently using the maximum amount of

space available in its primary location in downtown Lufkin. To maintain the present ratio of service availability, Lufkin will need approximately 115 police officers when the local population reaches 50,000 persons.

The Sheriff's Office facilities include the Angelina County jail, which has a 250-person capacity and is located on the corner of Second Street and Frank Avenue. Angelina County is currently in the process of constructing a new jail facility, which the Lufkin Police Department will be able to use for local prisoners within 2 years. This will allow the Police Department to convert the space it is currently using for prisoners, making that space available for other necessary operations, such as a police property room. Subsequently, the current police property room could then convert into police office space, which will provide adequate expansion space for the Police Department's main facility for at least the next five years.



**ILLUSTRATION 5-2**  
**The Lufkin Police Department Facility**

<sup>5-1</sup> The Police Department is contained within City Hall but is not included within the City Hall square footage of 37,760 square feet.



## The Lufkin Fire Department

The Lufkin Fire Department employs a total of 80 people, with approximately 69 emergency service personnel who rotate shifts in order to provide constant service. There are several stations within Lufkin; those stations, their locations, and the number of personnel at each are as follows:

- ◆ Fire Administration: 111 South Third Street, 9 people
- ◆ Central Station: 314 East Lufkin Avenue, 19 to 23 people
- ◆ Fire Station #3: 1112 Atkinson Drive, 3 people
- ◆ Fire Station #4: 2815 South John Reddit, 3 people
- ◆ Fire Station #5: 1408 Kurth Drive, 3 people
- ◆ Fire Station #6: 408 Whitehouse Road, 3 people

It is important to note that the Fire Department receives in excess of 3,000 calls per year, and grant money has recently been applied for in order to provide the Fire Department with needed support equipment.



ILLUSTRATION 5-3

The Lufkin Fire Department Facility Downtown

It is recommended that the City investigate the feasibility of increasing Fire Department personnel. As a general rule, a minimum of 4 firepersons are needed at each station on a consistent basis to adequately serve the population. The Fire Department is currently only able to have 3 firepersons at each at one time.

It is also recommended that the City consider relocating Fire Station #4. The current response time from Station #4 is problematic with the traffic along the Loop. The Fire Department has identified an alternate location on Old Union Road (west of Largent). This property, which is approximately ¼-acre in size, should be investigated, and if feasible, should be pursued for this relocation.

In addition, a new station will likely be needed in the future along the Interstate Highway 69 corridor, due to the fact that development in the area will likely increase as the corridor is constructed. The City should pursue the purchase of land along this corridor for this future station, before costs increase due to development demand. (See **Plate 5-1** for existing and proposed fire station locations).



**Insert Plate 5-1: Fire Station  
Locations**



## The Parks & Recreation Department

The Parks & Recreation Department facility is located at 125 North First Street, and consists of approximately 9,500 square feet. The department employs 3 full-time people and 1 part-time person. Other buildings and facilities, their sizes, and the number of employees at each location are as follows:

- ◆ The Park Maintenance Facility: 422 Jack Street, 2,300 square feet, 13 full-time people and 8 seasonal employees;
- ◆ Winston Park Pool: 400 Jack Street, 1,000-square-foot building, 6 seasonal employees;
- ◆ Jones Pool: MLK Drive at Kurth Drive, 1,000-square-foot building, 2 seasonal employees;
- ◆ Brandon Center: Highland Street and Keltys Street, 2,500 square feet, 1 full-time person.

A new Park Master Plan (hereby incorporated by reference) was written for Lufkin in 1998, which helps the City obtain grant money for park improvements and prioritize park and recreation projects. Consideration should be given to the construction of the following recreational facilities:

- ◆ A recreation center
- ◆ A new swimming pool(s)
- ◆ A location for the operation of remote-controlled airplanes

In addition, the City should consider the adoption of a park dedication ordinance, which would assist the City in adequately serving the recreational needs of the local population as development occurs.

## The Civic Center / Convention Center

The current Lufkin Civic Center/ Convention Center is located at 601 North Second Street, is 16,000 square feet, and has seven full-time employees. It is recommended that the existing Civic Center/Convention Center be maintained at its existing location in the downtown area with a transit link to the new transit center (this is further discussed in the Downtown Special Study in the *Future Land Use Plan*).

It is further recommended that a new convention center be constructed along a major transportation corridor (e.g., U.S. Highway 59), in the vicinity of restaurants and hotels. This new convention center should be multi-functional, with meeting rooms, banquet rooms, high-tech capabilities, and adequate loading space. It should also be linked, through the local transit system, to areas of interest and tourism destinations (e.g., the Ellen Trout Zoo) throughout Lufkin.



## The Kurth Library

Library facilities are usually provided on an as-needed basis in response to community growth. The City recognized the need for increased local library services, and has recently completed a new library located at 706 South Raguet. The library has 35,300 square feet, with the capability of expanding another 16,000 square feet when necessary. Seven full-time and six part-time people are employed at the Kurth Library. The following high-tech equipment has been integrated into the new library:

- ◆ 31 public-access Internet computers, with room for expansion by an additional 8 terminals;
- ◆ 12 cataloguing stations.



ILLUSTRATION 5-4  
The Kurth Memorial Library

The American Library Association (ALA) standard for library space in relation to population is 0.75 square feet per library patron. The U.S. Census 2000 estimated Lufkin's population to be

approximately 32,700 people. Based upon the standard of 0.75 square feet per person, the current population requires approximately 24,525 square feet of library space. Therefore, the present library space of 35,300 square feet is adequate to serve the existing population; at this size, the City could grow to a population of almost 50,000 people without the need for expansion.

It should be noted that many patrons of the new Kurth Library are anticipated to be from Angelina County, but not necessarily from the City of Lufkin. In order to meet the demand from the County community, it is recommended that the City be proactive in helping to establish a County-wide library system. It is envisioned that this system would allow Lufkin and surrounding communities to share in the provision of library services through satellite libraries that would be smaller in size than the Kurth Library.

## The Ellen Trout Zoo

Since the Zoo's opening in 1967, it has provided the City of Lufkin with a significant tourist attraction. It is operated on approximately 128 acres, and has approximately 125,000 visitors per year. In addition, the Zoo has experienced consistent growth in terms of the number of visitors it receives each year; this growth has averaged approximately 7 percent annually during the past few years. The Zoo has



proven to be an economic asset to the Lufkin area, representing \$2.7 million in annual revenue for the Lufkin area according to the Angelina Chamber of Commerce<sup>5-2</sup>. This revenue is expected to increase proportionally with the increase in visitors each year.

Future expansion of the Zoo, however, will be a challenge. There is a limited amount of room for short-term expansion on the Zoo's current site, depending on the size of the exhibit/activity. Land should be secured just north of the Zoo to ensure adequate expansion room is available. This should be pursued in the near future, before development in the area to the north increases.

Another challenge for the Ellen Trout Zoo is adequate parking. This continues to be problematic, mainly due to the size constraints of the site. The Zoo has been proactive in attempting to overcome this challenge by initiating studies, which are currently underway, to address this problem.

It is strongly recommended that the City ensure that the Ellen Trout Zoo is linked to the downtown area via the local transit system. A new transit center will be located in downtown Lufkin in the future (this is further discussed in the Downtown Special Study in the *Future Land Use Plan*). In addition, tourism opportunities in Lufkin would be increased by using the transit system as

a key link between the downtown area, the Ellen Trout Zoo, the local hotels/motels, the Civic Center, and the new convention center (when constructed in the future).



**ILLUSTRATION 5-5**  
**The Lufkin Animal Control Facility**

## Recommendations

In the event that Lufkin experiences a major natural disaster (e.g., flooding, tornado, etc.), the City Hall facility would serve as the communication center. However, there were no special construction considerations made for this possibility when the Lufkin City Hall was constructed. Therefore, it is recommended that the feasibility of constructing a *satellite emergency management facility* be investigated. It is envisioned that this facility would be specifically constructed to withstand a natural disaster (to the furthest extent possible), and would provide for communication availability during such an emergency.

<sup>5-2</sup> Information from the Ellen Trout Zoo Master Plan, written in 1996 by McCollow & Associates, Inc.



It should be noted that the Animal Control and Solid Waste facility was built within the last 2 years, and therefore should be adequate for at least the next five years.

**Table 5-1:  
SPECIFIC PUBLIC FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Target Time Period</b>
1.) Conduct a detailed space study of City Hall.	2005-2006
2.) Purchase property for and construct a new Service Center Facility.	2007-2008
3.) Convert the current City jail space into a Police Property Room; Convert the current Police Property Room into Police office space.	2004-2005
4.) Relocate Fire Station #4, possibly to the alternate location identified on Union Road.	2007-2008
5.) Adopt a park dedication ordinance.	2002-2003 (Immediate)
6.) Investigate the construction of a new convention center.	2005-2006
7.) Investigate the property adjacent to the Ellen Trout Zoo to allow room for Zoo expansion.	2002-2003 (Immediate)
8.) Investigate the possibility of constructing a satellite emergency management facility.	2005-2006

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