



DOWNTOWN LOVINGTON

Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan



Adopted by City Commission
AUGUST 13, 2018

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LOVINGTON

LEA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-74

A RESOLUTION MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS PURSUANT TO THE NM METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT CODE, AND APPROVING THE LOVINGTON DOWNTOWN METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

WHEREAS, Section 3-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (Sections 3-60A-1 through 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978) states: "A municipality shall not prepare a metropolitan redevelopment plan for an area unless the governing body by resolution determines the area to be a blighted area and designates the area as appropriate for a metropolitan redevelopment plan.", and

WHEREAS, the City of Lovington ("City") and New Mexico MainStreet, and their employees, have for some time engaged in a study of blighted areas within the downtown area, and have submitted their findings and recommendations concerning the area detailed in the Designation Report, a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown of the City of Lovington is the historic center of social and economic activity of the City; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of the Plan will provide benefits and opportunities for redevelopment enabling the area to reach its full economic and cultural potential; and

WHEREAS, project identified in the Plan will positively impact the safety and wellbeing of residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 30-60A-8 NMSA 1978 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, the City Commission caused to be published in the Lovington Leader, a newspaper of general circulation, a notice containing a general description of the proposed Lovington Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area and the date, time and place where the City Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the boundaries of the Lovington Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area are delineated on Exhibit B; and

WHEREAS, the Lovington Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan has been reviewed and approved for adoption by New Mexico MainStreet.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION that:

1. The City Commission, after having conducted a public hearing pursuant to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, adopts, as its Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan, the Lovington Downtown Metropolitan Area Plan, as attached hereto as Exhibit B and incorporated herein.
2. The City Commission, after having conducted public hearing pursuant to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code, finds that:
 - A. The Lovington Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan proposes activities for the redevelopment of the area that will aid in the elimination and prevention of blight; and
 - B. The Lovington Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan conforms to and complements the Lovington Comprehensive Plan; and
 - C. The Lovington Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan affords maximum opportunity consistent with the needs of the community for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the Lovington Downtown area by private enterprise or persons, and the objectives of the Lovington Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan justify the proposed activities as public purposes and needs
3. The City shall support efforts to establish development projects intended to make the area more pedestrian friendly and mixed in income and use, thus affording the opportunity for locally- owned small businesses to establish themselves, and the City shall also support community education activities that broaden the local knowledge base and invite members from outside the immediate area to take part in these community education activities.
4. The City shall support these programs in providing technical assistance to local committees interested in developing mixed- use, mixed-income housing programs, and by providing technical assistance to businesses within the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan for the purpose of obtaining funding for redevelopment activities, and providing guidance and technical assistance to business wishing to open, operate, and/or expand within the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area.
5. City Commission finds and determines the MRA area benefits from redevelopment projects, which the MRA Downtown report identifies and is in the interests of public health, safety, and welfare.

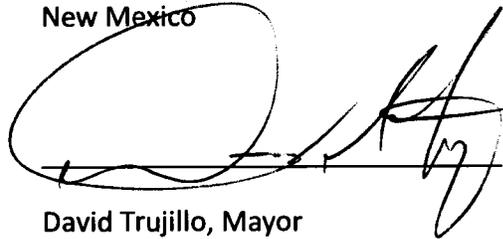
6. All Resolutions, or parts thereof, in conflict with this Resolution are hereby repealed; this repealer shall not be construed to revive any resolution, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.

7. If any section paragraph, sentence, word or phrase of this resolution is for any reason held to be invalid or unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this resolution. The Commission hereby declares that it would have passed this resolution and each section, paragraph, sentence, word or phrase thereof irrespective of any provisions being declared unconstitutional or otherwise invalid.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 13TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2018

City of Lovington

New Mexico



David Trujillo, Mayor



ATTEST:



Anna Juarez, City Clerk

DOWNTOWN LOVINGTON

Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CITY COMMISSION

Bernard Butcher, Mayor Pro-Tem

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STEERING COMMITTEE

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DOWNTOWN LOVINGTON

Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan

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CHAPTER I
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Lovington Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) Plan is the result of a 9-month process that sought to engage the community, both residents and business owners, into planning for the future of the Downtown Lovington. The process involved a series of different methods and opportunities to engage the public in developing the Downtown MRA Plan. Generally speaking, participants in the planning process were asked, ***“What kind of place do you want Downtown Lovington to be in the future?”***

The Downtown MRA Plan expresses the collective vision and provides a road map for leading Downtown Lovington towards a more inviting, vibrant, and prosperous business district. A series of catalytic public and private sector projects and investments,

based on the development of strong and sustainable partnerships, provide the necessary guidance for making this vision a reality. The successful implementation of the Downtown MRA Plan is dependent on the City of Lovington prioritizing the redevelopment of Downtown through the allocation and pursuance of funding resources, and perhaps most of all, the acknowledgment that Downtown Lovington is the heart and economic center of the City.

The MRA district was established in 2017 by the Lovington City Commission. It was an expansion of the previous MRA district and the 2010 City of Lovington MRA Plan. The boundaries of the MRA district are Birch Avenue to the north, Avenue D to the south, Eddy Street to the east, and 2nd Street to the west. The historic Lea County Courthouse anchors the Downtown area, and several historic structures are located within this core area.



Lea County Courthouse, c. 1931, located on S. Main Avenue.

I.2 LOVINGTON MAINSTREET

Lovington MainStreet is a charitable, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving Lovington’s Downtown area, and by extension, the entire City. Lovington MainStreet’s slogan “Preserving our past – Loving our Present – Improving our Future” points to the importance the organization puts on rooting future success in Lovington’s history. Lovington MainStreet was originally established in 2001, but was dissolved and then reactivated in 2008, and has remained active since then. Lovington MainStreet’s mission and vision are as follows:

Mission: Lovington MainStreet is to be the catalyst for revitalizing, beautifying, and energizing the MainStreet District through education, promotion, and assistance.

Vision: Our Vision is to be a model MainStreet Organization and an invaluable resource, through the unified efforts of our progressive leadership, to facilitate a stimulus for commerce.

Lovington MainStreet works with various entities to create an economically viable business environment while preserving local cultural and historic resources.

Lovington MainStreet Project is supported by New Mexico MainStreet, a grassroots economic development program that assists communities in revitalizing their traditional commercial neighborhoods. New Mexico MainStreet, a division of the New Mexico Economic Development Department, works throughout New Mexico to help affiliated downtown organizations create an economically viable business environment while preserving local cultural and historic resources. Its mission statement is as follows:

“The New Mexico MainStreet Program fosters economic development in the state by supporting local MainStreet revitalization organizations and their work in downtowns and the adjacent neighborhoods. The Program provides resources, education, training, and services that preserve and enhance the built environment, local historic culture and heritage and stimulate the economic vitality of each participating community.”

Lovington MainStreet has successfully completed actions under the National Main Street Center’s established “Four-Point Approach™” of Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Vitality. The impact of these efforts are visible in the Downtown area.



©National Main Street Center - Four Point Approach™.

According to its 2017 Annual Accreditation Report and Recommendations by New Mexico MainStreet, Lovington MainStreet identified the following implementation strategies within the “Four-Point Approach”:

Organization

- Develop capacity to advance the mission of Lovington MainStreet.
- Increase awareness of Lovington MainStreet with the public and downtown merchants.
- Develop partnerships, policy and advocacy efforts to support the vision, mission, and goals of Lovington MainStreet.

Economic Vitality

- Foster economic development within the District.

Design

- Continue to foster improved infrastructure and physical changes in Downtown to establish a vibrant, engaging, and attractive MainStreet District.

Promotion

- Conduct promotions and events that enhance economic development within the District.

1.3 MRA DESIGNATION

The Lovington City Commission designated the current Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) on February 13, 2017. The 2017 MRA was an expansion of the original 2009 boundary to the north and east. The current MRA was based on a report prepared by the New Mexico MainStreet Program and Community by Design, which documented existing physical and economic conditions within the Downtown area that contribute to blight and substantially impair the social and economic well-being of Lovington residents. The 2017 MRA designation report documented:

- 1) Physical conditions, including building conditions; vacant and underutilized properties; broken, deteriorated, or missing sidewalks, curbs, and pavement; and

- 2) Demographic and economic conditions, including population characteristics; educational attainment; income and employment characteristics; and housing characteristics.



MRA and Lovington MainStreet boundaries.

The Lovington Downtown MRA designation was completed pursuant to the New Mexico Metropolitan Redevelopment Code (Article 3-60A-1 to 3-60A-48 NMSA 1978), which provides municipalities with the power to correct conditions in areas or neighborhoods that “substantially inflict or arrest the sound and orderly development” within the municipality. The municipality may only use these powers within designated metropolitan redevelopment areas.

Once the MRA designation is in place, the Metropolitan Redevelopment Code provides the guidance for preparing a Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan, Section 3-60A-9:

“When a municipality has complied with the provisions of the Redevelopment Law [3-60A-5 to 3-60A-13, 3-60A-14 to 3-60A-18 NMSA 1978] concerning public hearing and designation of an area as a metropolitan redevelopment area, it may prepare or cause to be prepared a metropolitan redevelopment plan; however, prior to final consideration of the plan by the local governing body, the plan shall be the subject of at least one public hearing held by the mayor or his designee, or the municipal planning commission, at which time comments from the public as a whole can be gathered and considered by the municipality in its preparation of the final plan. Following the public hearing, the local governing body may approve a metropolitan redevelopment plan if it finds that:

- The proposed activities will aid in the elimination or prevention of slum or blight, or the conditions which lead to the development of slum or blight;
 - A feasible method is included in the plan to provide individuals and families who occupy residential dwellings in the metropolitan redevelopment area, and who may be displaced by the proposed activities, with decent, safe and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such individuals and families;
 - The plan conforms to the general plan for the municipality as a whole; and
- The plan affords maximum opportunity consistent with the needs of the community for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the area by private enterprise or persons, and the objectives of the plan justify the proposed.

The MRA designation and the Downtown MRA Plan will assist the community in achieving the following goals:

- Elimination of detrimental public health and welfare conditions;
- Conservation, improvement, and expansion of commercial building stock;
- Expansion of commercial activity;
- Improvement and expansion of available housing; and
- Improvement of economic conditions through coordinated public and private investments.

1.4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A central component of the planning process for the Lovington Downtown MRA Plan was gathering input and feedback from the community stakeholders. The Lovington community’s contributions to this process included completing surveys, sharing information through interviews and discussions, participating in activities at the two-day workshop in February 2018, and attending public meetings. The following is an overview of the community engagement process and the input gathered.

MRA STEERING COMMITTEE

The MRA Steering Committee was established by the City of Lovington and Lovington MainStreet in the beginning of the planning process. The members of the Steering Committee included City staff, Lovington MainStreet board members, Chamber of Commerce, etc. The Steering Committee was asked to play an active role in the following ways:

- Being the local sounding board, providing the Project Team with the local point of view, and

providing and verifying information from the local community.

- Assisting in getting the word out to the community about the MRA Plan and process to ensure maximum participation from stakeholders.
- Helping identify planning issues in the Downtown MRA District and discuss how they might impact the community.
- Reviewing and commenting on the concepts and strategies developed by the Project Team based on public participation and research.
- Reviewing draft products for clarity and accuracy.
- Taking an active role in attendance at public meetings and gatherings acting as an ambassador to the community.

A kick-off meeting was held with the Steering Committee in December 2017. Consensus Planning facilitated the discussion. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the consultants and the project to the Steering Committee, strategize about the two-day workshop, and discuss the members' aspirations for the MRA Plan and redevelopment of the Downtown area. The Steering Committee stayed involved throughout the planning process by participating in the two-day workshop, having teleconferencing meetings, discussions, and emails with the consultant team. The final Steering Committee meeting was held on July 12, 2018 to discuss the draft Downtown MRA Plan prior to the public meeting that same evening and cost estimates for the proposed wayfinding components.

Steering Committee Photo Diaries

As part of the discussion at the kick-off meeting, the consultant asked the Steering Committee to take photographs of their favorite areas and the areas they saw as needing improvement within the Downtown MRA District. A project Dropbox was created for the Steering Committee to upload these “photo diaries”. They were also asked to write what about these elements made them special to them or why they needed to be improved. There were many common elements between the Steering Committee members.

For instance, several Steering Members took “favorite place” photos of the Lea County Courthouse green space and walkways, Lea Theater, and the well-maintained buildings along Main Avenue. There were also common “places that need improvement” photos of boarded-up vacant buildings, cracked sidewalks, and large parking lots. This exercise gave the Steering Committee an opportunity to communicate their feelings and opinions about Downtown Lovington in a more creative way instead of a typical meeting setting. This approach was successful in stimulating discussions about Downtown Lovington’s assets and opportunities from the eyes of the community members. The photo diaries were displayed and discussed during the workshop. The following page contains a sampling of the Steering Committee’s photo diaries.



Photo diaries and asset mapping.

FAVORITE PLACES



NEEDS IMPROVEMENT



Examples from the Steering Committee's photo diaries.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

As part of the community engagement process, Consensus Planning created two surveys; one for Downtown business owners and the other for the general public. The surveys were available approximately two months prior to, during, and after the community workshop, both on Survey Monkey and in hard copy. Links to the on-line surveys were also provided on the City of Lovington's website and Facebook page.

The Downtown business owner survey generated a total of 13 responses and the general public survey generated 121 responses. The surveys provided an important source of input from the Lovington community and helped steer the strategies and concepts that are contained in the Downtown MRA Plan. Some questions on the business survey were tailored for that group and vice versa for the general public. Both surveys included the same questions about amenities and desired economic development of Downtown. The following are some key take-aways from the survey results; full survey results are in Appendix A.

Downtown Business Owner Survey

- Most business owner survey respondents have been in business for over 10 years (47%) and have 0 to 5 employees (59%). Most have not experienced high turnover (53%) and most have not had a hard time finding employees for their business (71%).
- Most business owners said that the biggest benefit of having a business Downtown was location (59%), traffic flow (12%), and the presence of government workers (6%). When asked how they market their business to Lovington residents and/or visitors most identified social media (47%) and word of mouth (29%).

General Public Survey

- The majority of the respondents to the general public survey are residents of the City of Lovington (94%). Although the majority of the respondents live outside Downtown Lovington

(79%), a significant number live within the Downtown area (21%).

- Most respondents either strongly agree or agree that the City should encourage development of vacant or underutilized property in Downtown (82%). When asked, what types of residential development they would like to see in Downtown Lovington most would like to see rehabilitation of existing homes (32%), additional multi-family housing (29%), additional single family homes (18%), or no residential development at all (21%).

Survey Comparisons

There were several questions common to both the Downtown business owner and general public surveys. The following is a comparison of the responses from each question.

- When asked if Main Street is an important arterial that should be visually improved by the City, most of the general public strongly agreed (43%) and most of the business owners agreed (35%). Both the general public and business owners equally disagreed with the statement (18%).
- In response to whether Downtown Lovington is fun place to visit, shop, and walk around, the general public disagreed (32%), strongly disagreed (28%), or were neutral (20%). Most business owners were neutral (41%), agreed (24%), disagreed (24%), or strongly disagreed (12%).
- The most visited locations in Downtown by the general public were restaurants (31%) and retail stores (15%). For business owners, most of the respondents visited restaurants (59%) and business offices (29%). The least visited for both the general public and Downtown business owners were art galleries and museums and entertainment and special events.
- Most of the general public and business owners would like to see retail stores, restaurants, and festivals / events added or expanded in

Downtown. Lodging, farmers' market, and walking paths/trails were also popular choices among both survey respondents.

- For both survey groups, Downtown building conditions, visual attractiveness, and outdoor spaces were rated in fair to poor condition. Sidewalks, lighting, and crosswalks were amenities rated in good condition. Very few amenities were rated excellent.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

A two-day workshop was held on February 21-22, 2018 at the Troy Harris Center at 302 S. Main Street. The purpose of the workshop was to generate input from stakeholders and the general public on their vision for Downtown, and to provide for a variety of opportunities to engage the community. This included a Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, Asset Mapping, Photo Diaries, general discussions with the consultants and the Steering Committee, and a public presentation introducing the survey results, research graphics, and potential projects identified during the workshop. A review of the activities and a summary of the outcomes follow.

Asset Mapping

Using an aerial map of the MRA District, workshop participants were asked to place blue dots on locations they considered "community assets", green dots on "opportunity sites", and yellow dots on "locations where physical improvements are needed." Most dots were placed in the Downtown core area between Avenue B and Jefferson Avenue (see *Asset Map, next page*).



Asset mapping during the public workshop.

Examples of community assets identified:

- Lea County Courthouse
- Restaurants and shops along Main Street and Central Avenue
- Lea Theater
- Governmental and public facilities

Examples of opportunity sites identified:

- Vacant storefronts and vacant lots along Main Street
- Outdoor spaces such as Fran Atchley Park

Examples of locations where physical improvements are needed:

- Main Street Cafe building
- Storefronts in need of renovation or are vacant
- Vacant lots and dilapidated buildings on Main Street and surrounding streets



Mural being added to the exterior of the Troy Harris Center.



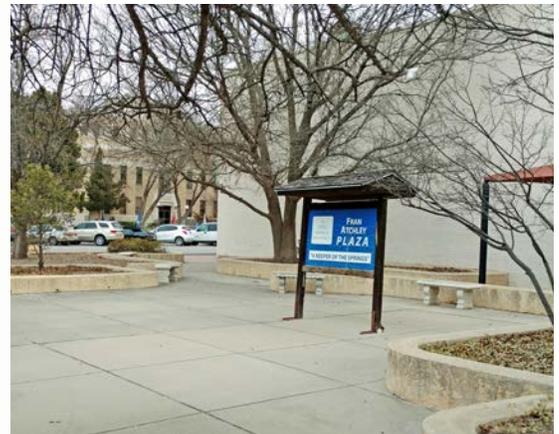
CITY OF LOVINGTON METROPOLITAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA

USING THE DOTS PROVIDED, PLEASE IDENTIFY THE FOLLOWING ON THE MAP:

- Community Assets (existing buildings, properties, businesses, trails, parks, etc.)
- Opportunity Sites (existing buildings or properties that would be appropriate for redevelopment and/or reuse)
- Locations where physical improvements are needed (streets, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, lighting, etc.)



Community Asset: Lovington Public Library.



Opportunity Site: Fran Atchley Plaza.



Needs Improvement: Dilapidated buildings.

Results of the asset mapping from the public workshop.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

A SWOT analysis was led by the consultants during the workshop. It was intended to help participants identify the areas where the City and Downtown are succeeding and where more work needs to be done. The graphic below provides a list of the comments received during this segment of the workshop.

Public Presentation

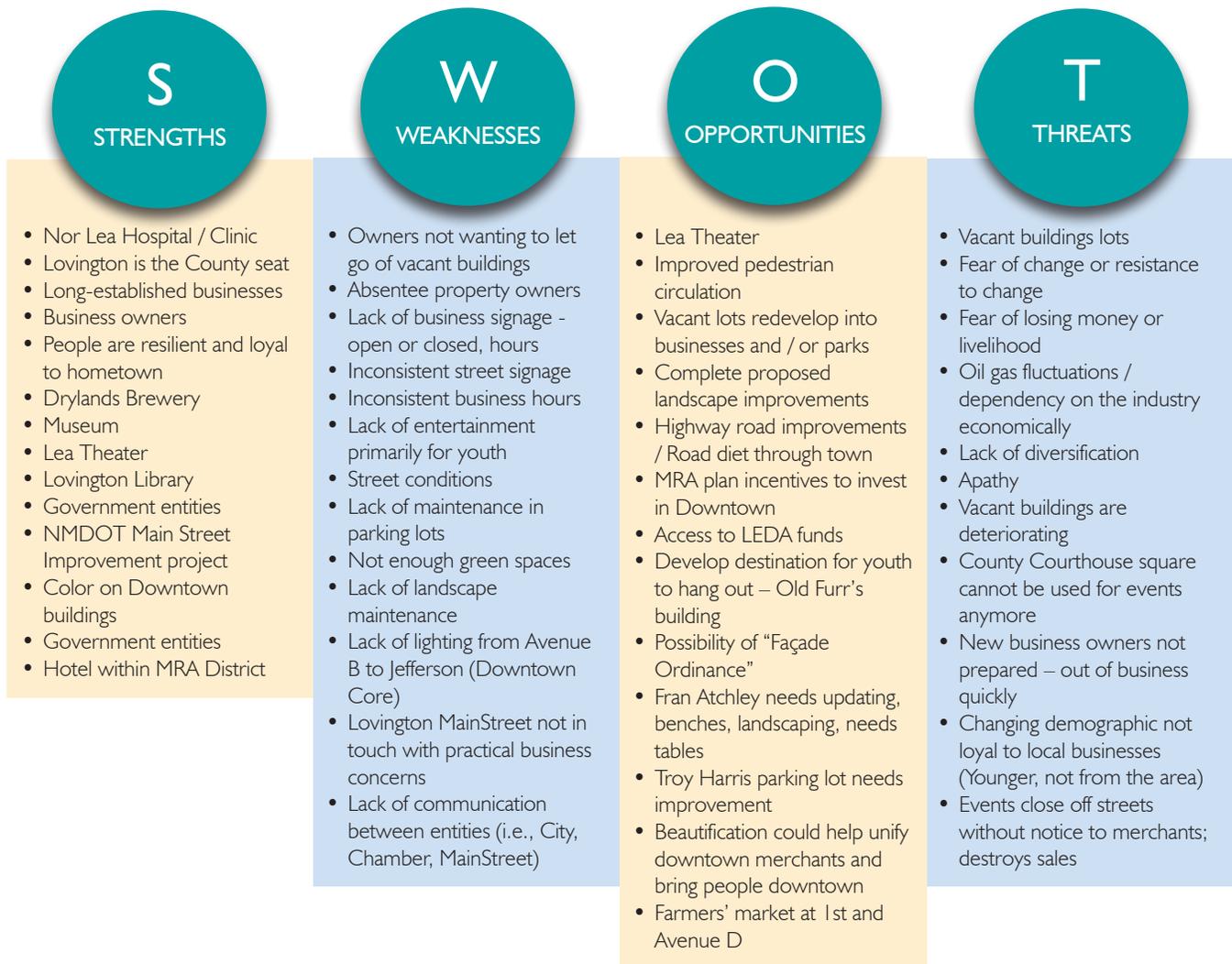
Consensus Planning gave a presentation at the end of the workshop, which included an overview of the MRA planning process and community survey results, summary workshop session outcomes, including the opportunity sites, wayfinding recommendations, and next steps. Participants provided feedback and potential opportunity sites were discussed, including:

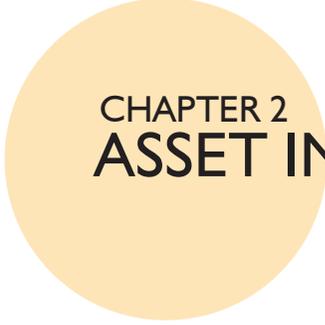
- Lea Theater
- Main Street Cafe

- Fran Atchley Plaza
- Two vacant lots for potential commercial and hotel development
- Smaller vacant lot for outdoor event area

Final Public Meeting

Consensus Planning presented the draft Downtown MRA Plan at the Troy Harris Center on July 12, 2018. Meeting participants included elected officials, business owners, members of the Lovington MainStreet Board, and community members. The participants' response to the draft Downtown MRA Plan was very positive. The Downtown MRA Master Plan was subsequently adopted by the City Council on August 13, 2018.





CHAPTER 2
ASSET INVENTORY

2.1 OVERVIEW

The Lovington Downtown MRA Plan contains a range of assets and opportunities that support the redevelopment and transition of Downtown into a more active shopping, entertainment, and business district. The City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, and private property and business owners should work together to leverage these assets and opportunities, and overcome the existing challenges. The following is a summary of the key assets and opportunities in Downtown Lovington:

- Downtown Lovington is anchored by the historic Lea County Courthouse, which was built in 1937 as a “New Deal” WPA project, and is on the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Cultural Properties. The beautifully landscaped grounds in front of the building has been the site of many community events. To the east of the historic Lea County Courthouse is the Lea County Judicial Complex, currently under construction. Once complete, the Judicial Complex will cover a three-block area from Main Street to Eddy Street. A new parking lot will be located between the historic Courthouse building and the new Courthouse building. The plan is to repurpose the historic Courthouse building for County administration functions. The anticipated completion date for the Lea County Judicial Complex is January 2019.
- The historic Lea Theater, built in 1948 and located to the south of the Lea County Courthouse at 106 E. Central Avenue, is a strong economic anchor and cultural asset for Downtown Lovington. The City of Lovington wisely purchased the Lea Theater and currently runs the day-to-day operations. The City applied for and received \$100,000 in LEDA funds from the New Mexico MainStreet Historic Theater Initiative in 2014. In 2017, the Lea Theater received a donation of 250 new seats from a theater chain in Bryan, Texas. These improvements will ensure that the Lea Theater

remain as an economic anchor for Downtown Lovington.

- Main Street (NM 18) runs through the center of Downtown Lovington. As a NMDOT facility, it carries a significant amount of traffic, including heavy trucks. In 2017, NMDOT and the City of Lovington entered into an agreement to upgrade Main Street from Jackson Avenue to Avenue F. Upgrades will include a road diet that reduces the number of travel lanes in each direction from two lanes to one lane with designated left turn lanes at intersections. On-street parking will remain, and new bulb-outs, sidewalk improvements, pedestrian crosswalks, lighting, and street furniture will be installed. The project will also include landscape improvements from Jefferson Avenue to Avenue A, drainage improvements, and a lower speed limit through the Downtown core. The project is anticipated to be completed by May 2019. This will be a major improvement to Downtown Lovington that will encourage a safer and more pedestrian-oriented district.



Lea Theater neon sign and marquee.

- Drylands Brewing, a pizza restaurant and brew pub located at 322 N. Main Street, opened in 2017. This was the result of a successful public/private partnership between the City of Lovington, New Mexico Economic Development Department, and the private owners. The City of Lovington owned the property and sold it in November 2015 for a nominal amount. In 2016, the City approved the EDC's recommendation to use \$80,000 in LEDA funds for brewing equipment and infrastructure. Subsequently, in 2017, the City approved an agreement with New Mexico Economic Development Department and Drylands to act as a fiscal agent for the transfer of \$100,000 in state funds to the brewery. The Drylands' owners invested approximately \$950,000 in creating the restaurant, tap room, and canning facility.

This project provided 30 new jobs and has been a huge success for Downtown Lovington. This public/private partnership is a model that other projects identified in the Downtown MRA Plan should emulate to support the continued revitalization of Downtown Lovington.

- Although outside of Downtown Lovington, the Nor-Lea Hospital, Medical Clinic, and Cancer Center, located at 1600 N. Main Street, is a major employer and draw to the community for people seeking healthcare services. The Nor-Lea Hospital is a full service facility that provides primary care, specialty care, cancer treatment, emergency services, etc. Adjacent to these facilities is the recently developed Lovington Trails Apartments. Downtown Lovington is well poised to benefit from the visitors and development activity generated by these facilities and projects.



Drylands Brewing sign along Main Street.



Nor-Lea Hospital District - Lovington Medical Clinic.

Lovington was not an oil town like Hobbs, its neighbor to the south, but oil and gas production has been an important part of its history and the livelihood of its residents, especially following World War II. In the 1920s, major oil discoveries in the Permian Basin of Lea County led to rapid population growth in Hobbs.

For the most part, Lovington kept its distance from the oil discoveries of the 1920s, even showing disdain for the life of the oilman and the scars left on the grassy plains. By 1950, oil production around Lovington was 21,000 barrels a day.

Between 1946 and 1953, Lovington experienced growth, construction and development, like no other period in its history. The town modernized at this time, with many paved streets, and water and sewer systems.

Surviving buildings dating from this period provide tangible evidence of the oil industry's influence on the built environment in this small town. In 1948, J.W. Allen of A & Y Lumber Company in Lovington told the Lovington Press, "I have never seen anything like it. We are having scores of interested people make inquiries daily about a rent house, a home, or a business building."

Post-1950s Economic Diversification

By 1960, Lovington had grown into a typical American market town, focused on its remarkable Courthouse Square and featuring numerous "mom and pop" retail businesses surrounding the Lea County Courthouse. As Hobbs continued its strong growth, the short 25-mile highway between the two towns spawned a form of retail and commercial growth characterized by "big box" retail businesses such as K-Mart, franchise fast food restaurants, service businesses, and industrial complexes to serve primarily the oil and gas industry. Since 2008, the northern Hobbs corridor on NM Highway 18 has witnessed dramatic growth in hotels and motels, restaurants, shopping centers and a movie theater complex, all thriving on the surging oil and gas industry.

Spurred by a major oil boom in the 1980s, the expansion of the retail commercial district in Lovington outside of the Downtown core grew rapidly southward along Main Street on the Hobbs highway and westward on Avenue D. The rapid commercial growth had



Lea County oil field.

the unfortunate impact of weakening the Downtown market. A crash in the oil boom by 1990 crippled the local economy and left many commercial buildings and storefronts vacant, a legacy from which Lovington has been slow to recover. Adding to this condition, the strength of Hobbs' retail and service industries has had the effect of shrinking Lovington's retail service area and making many commercial buildings obsolete.

Today, Lovington retains its small-town feel with streets of predominantly one and two-story commercial buildings. The town's economy is still driven by the historic industries of livestock ranching, farming, and oil and gas production.

2.3 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

CITY OF LOVINGTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The current City of Lovington Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the City Commission in 2015. It provides the overarching policy guidance for growth and physical development of the City over the next 20 years. The Downtown MRA Plan is consistent with the general recommendations and is intended to be an implementation action of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vision statements for Lovington as a whole and Downtown Lovington as stated in the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

"Lovington is a beautiful destination community, proud of its high quality of life, diversified economy and recreation. Our friendly, inclusive, small-town

character makes Lovington a unique and appealing place for people of all ages, drawing visitors and new residents from all over.”

“The Downtown has beautifully restored and new buildings with thriving businesses, entertainment venues, residential units, and activities on the street. It hosts regular entertainment and cultural events in Courthouse Square and other venues.”

Lovington MainStreet initiatives are highlighted in the Comprehensive Plan, including popular events such as Smokin’ on the Plaza and Live on Main Street Summer Festival. Recommendations relative to Downtown include cleaning up vacant lots and dilapidated buildings, and installation of community gateways.

The Comprehensive Plan cites the Zoning Code as an issue that impacts Downtown. The Zoning Code “lacks a broad base of uses, and does not differentiate conditional uses from permitted uses, and it does not include a complete set of procedures or administration, enforcement, and penalty provisions.”

Applicable Goals, Objectives, and Policies

The Comprehensive Plan includes a series of goals, objectives, and policy statements that are applicable to Downtown Lovington. The statements are categorized under the planning elements of land use, housing, transportation, facilities, community character, and economic development as follows:

Land Use

Land Use Goal 5: Support land use recommendations in the Lovington Downtown Master Plan.

- Consider a new zone district for the Downtown that contains downtown design and development standards for historic preservation, mixed use development, and compatible infill development.
- Develop gateways to the downtown.
- Design gateways by choosing architecture, landscaping, public art, and limited signage to create an attractive, representative visual display that shows pride in the community and welcomes visitors.
- Leverage new redevelopment programs through incentives.

- Promote downtown housing.
- Consider developing a vacant building ordinance to enhance inspection and code enforcement.

Housing

Housing Goal 3: Develop housing that supports economic development through infilling and creating desirable residential and mixed use neighborhoods.

- Identify rehabilitation priorities to promote infill with a focus on downtown and along South Main.
- Promote the development of mixed use projects, especially downtown and along South Main.

Housing Goal 4: Promote development that improves quality of life, economic vitality and community sustainability.

- Consider expanding the Downtown MRA or the designation of a second MRA in the South Main Street area to include housing as part of the redevelopment strategy.

Transportation

Transportation Goal 7: Encourage visitors and local residents to arrive, park and walk in the downtown area.

- Consider constructing parking lots and/or structures to accommodate anticipated visitors to the Downtown area when demand increases.
- Provide wayfinding signage to the downtown area from key intersections within the community.
- Implement streetscape improvements recommended in the Downtown Master Plan.

Transportation Goal 8: Develop trails and street improvements so that community assets that are a source of pride for the City are more visible and usable.

- Use special studies, such as the Downtown Action Plan, to develop standards for street landscaping, building facades, and artwork.
- Provide amenities to the community such as enhanced sidewalks and streets that are pleasant for traveling.
- Install wayfinding signs to important locations such as the Downtown area, S. Main Street district, and I 7th and Avenue D commercial node.

Facilities

Facilities Element Goal 3: Use municipal facilities improvements to support and expand economic development.

- Continue to locate administrative facilities in Downtown.
- Consider locating new public buildings, such as a recreation center, in prominent locations that may spur redevelopment, including in or near Downtown and the S. Main District.

Facilities Element Goal 4: Preserve and maintain historic municipal buildings.

- Continue the use and upkeep of historic municipal buildings to preserve their structural integrity.
- When making alterations, consider retaining valued architectural features of old buildings that are not listed on the state or national registers.
- Enhance architecture and landscaping in nodes and major thoroughfares.
- Develop urban design plans for streetscape projects in the Downtown, S. Main District, Avenue D commercial area, and other revitalization areas.
- Encourage pedestrian amenities and outdoor dining in mixed use districts and other revitalization areas.
- Establish a way-finding system with signs for visitors to readily find parks, mixed use districts, and other destinations such as the Lea County Fairgrounds.
- Encourage preservation of historic buildings.
- Maintain existing city buildings and develop any new buildings in prominent locations with outstanding architectural and landscaping features.
- Encourage new commercial buildings to have attractive architectural and landscaping features.

Community Character

Community Character Goal 4: Organize mixed use districts to implement land use changes and urban design projects.

- Support the existing MainStreet district and MainStreet Corp. and its efforts in streetscape improvements, economic repositioning, and other MainStreet goals.

- Conduct meetings with property owners, business owners and residents to assess challenges and assets for revitalization in new districts.

Economic Development

Economic Development Goal 4: Build a redevelopment program for the Downtown and South Main Street Area.

- Conduct research to support redevelopment.
- Create a redevelopment plan.
- Implement the redevelopment plan.
- Expand the downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment District or create a new Metropolitan Redevelopment District.

LOVINGTON DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Following the City's designation of its first Downtown MRA district in 2009, the City of Lovington developed its first Downtown Master Plan. Once adopted, the 2018 Downtown MRA Plan will replace the 2009 Downtown Master Plan.

As part of the planning process, residents expressed their desire to preserve and enhance Lovington's unique character and helped to identify actions that would implement their vision. Other key aspirations included:

- A diversified mix of businesses
- Flexible public gathering spaces for community events and activities
- Appropriate, attractive design for buildings and streets
- Housing that is affordable to people with mixed incomes
- Continues to be a place for Lovington's residents and provides for their needs

The 2009 Downtown Master Plan included capital improvement projects, including Main Street streetscape and gateway, Central Avenue Plaza redesign, trails and pathways, community gardens, market square, etc. The City has completed some of these projects and has decided not to pursue the others.

2.4 EXISTING LAND USE and ZONING

There are a variety of land uses within the Downtown MRA district. The breakdown of land uses and their relative proportion are as follows:

- Single family Residential - 25%
- Commercial - 17%
- Restaurant - 4%
- Heavy Commercial - 4%
- Office - 4%
- Institutional - 18%
- Parks and / Open Space - 3%
- Parking Lot - 3%
- Vacant Building - 9%
- Vacant Lot - 17%

The types of land uses and the land use pattern within the Downtown MRA is somewhat atypical. There is little evidence of a discernible pattern typical for a Downtown business district where commercial use would normally form a strong corridor along Main Street. Commercial use (including restaurants) in Downtown Lovington is limited at 21% and could certainly be expanded to many of the vacant properties and buildings, particularly north of Madison Avenue. While it is recommended that residential use (ideally multi-family) falls within or in close proximity to Downtown, there is a large percentage of single family residential, approximately 25%, that is primarily manufactured homes distributed throughout the district, east and west of Main Street. Institutional use, generally City and County facilities that are appropriate for the Downtown business district, comprise approximately 18% of the MRA District and are mostly clustered south of Washington Avenue. Within the commercial land use category, approximately 4% of the property is heavy commercial, including construction yards, large truck repair shops, and businesses linked to the oil and gas industry, which can detract from the goal of creating a Downtown area that is walkable and livable.

A large percentage of the properties and buildings are vacant, approximately 26%, that are scattered throughout the MRA District. Vacant storefronts are interspersed between occupied offices and commercial

retail. There are also larger vacant buildings that span whole blocks along Main Street, including the Main Street Cafe building that sits between Washington Avenue and Adams on the west side of Main Street.

The patchwork of land uses does not lend itself to a cohesive identity of Downtown. This constrains the ability of making Downtown a special place that people come to shop, eat, work, or participate in a community event. The Downtown MRA Plan provides recommendations that address these land use and development issues with the overriding goal of bringing more life and activity to the District.

FIGURE-GROUND ANALYSIS

As part of the analysis of existing land use, a figure-ground analysis was also performed to determine the relationship between the buildings (figure) and the open space around the buildings (ground), relationship between buildings and public rights-of-way, and overall development patterns. Generally, a downtown area should have a high ratio of buildings to land, and a shallow setback from public rights-of-way. Large open areas between buildings and large surface parking lots along the commercial corridor discourage pedestrians from walking from one business to another. Filling these gaps and locating parking lots to the side or rear of buildings will encourage a more walkable district and allow visitors to park once and walk to any location within Downtown Lovington.

This pattern is evident in the Downtown core on the west side of Main Street between Avenue A and Adams Avenue. Most other areas of the MRA District are showing a low floor to area ratio causing oversized lots to building size which can give the impression of emptiness. This is especially true in the northern section of the MRA District along Love and Eddy Streets where there are many large lots with a single mobile home.



EXISTING LAND USE

- Single Family Residential
- Commercial
- Restaurant
- Heavy Commercial
- Office
- Institutional
- Parks/Open Space
- Parking Lot
- Vacant Building
- Vacant Lot

FIGURE-GROUND ANALYSIS

■ Building Footprint



EXISTING ZONING

The City of Lovington's Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1978. The purpose of the Ordinance is "to lessen congestion in the streets; to promote the health and the general welfare; to secure safety from fire, panic, and other dangers; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to facilitate the adequate provisions of transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks, and other public requirements".

The Zoning Ordinance contains four zoning districts, including "A" Single Family Dwellings, "B" Multiple Dwelling District, "C" Commercial District, and "D" Industrial District. The vast majority of the Downtown MRA district is zoned "C" Commercial and a small portion is zoned "A" Single Family Dwelling. Descriptions of these two zoning districts are as follows:

- "A" Single-Family Dwelling District: Zoning District "A" allows single-family dwellings, parks and playgrounds, and churches. Maximum building height is two and one-half stories or 35 feet.
- "C" Commercial District: Permitted uses in zoning district "C" are uses allowed in the "A" and "B" districts; advertising signs and billboards not exceeding 40 square feet when attached to a building and not extending more than 1 foot from the building surface; amusement place or theaters; trailer and tourist camps or courts. The Ordinance identifies 51 prohibited uses in this zone, which are high intensity commercial and industrial uses.

If a commercial use is not specifically prohibited, it is deemed permissive in the C zone. The lack of defining permissive and conditional uses has resulted in a patchwork of residential and non-residential land uses with no discernible pattern. There are areas of residential development adjacent to heavy commercial uses and no buffering in between. Typical procedures and administration is lacking in the Zoning Ordinance. There is also no specific multi-family zone and relatively few development standards typical for a municipal zoning ordinance. A recommendation of the Downtown MRA Plan is for the City to complete

an overhaul of the Zoning Ordinance so it is in line and consistent with the 2015 Comprehensive Plan and the goals for the Downtown MRA Plan. The City may want to consider either creating a specific zone for Downtown or a Downtown zoning overlay district, which may give the City greater authority to regulate special features such as historic buildings and other building and site design elements.

2.5 HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Lovington Historic Commercial District was listed on the State Register of Cultural Properties in 2011. The District encompasses approximately 24 acres that is bounded by Madison Avenue on the north, Avenue B on the south, alley between Love Street and East Street on the east, and Second Street on the west (see map, page 25). The historic structures are listed on both the State and National registers, with the exception of the Commercial Hotel, which is only listed on the State Register (see Table 2.1).

LEA COUNTY MUSEUM

The Lea County Museum is located in the "Old Commercial Hotel" building at 103 S. Love Street. The Museum supports historic developments in Downtown Lovington and serves as a repository of historic items and artifacts related to Lovington's history. The Museum contains replica exhibits of the original Lovington Townsite and rotating art and photographic exhibitions highlighting the history of Lovington and Lea County. The Museum also manages the historic Sewalt House, an excellent example of the Craftsman Style.



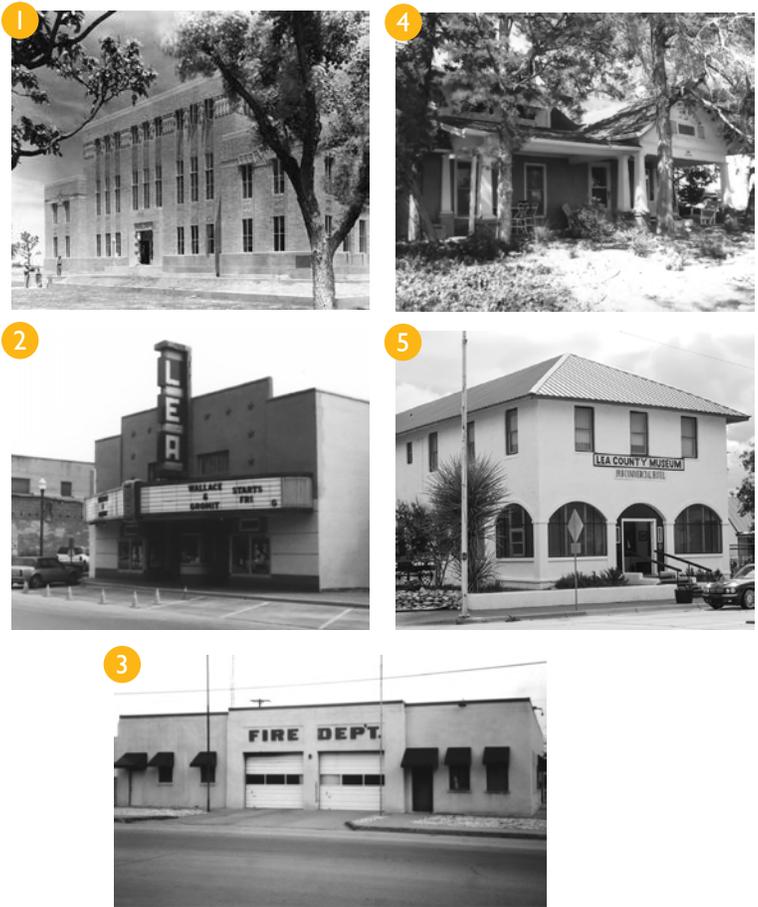
Historic Sewalt House on Jefferson Avenue.

TABLE 2.1: HISTORIC RESOURCES

Structure	Date of Significance	State Register	National Register	Address
1. Lea County Courthouse	1936	✓	✓	100 Block Main Street
2. Lea Theater	1948-1956	✓	✓	106 E. Central Street
3. Lovington Fire Department Building	1918; 1933; 1969	✓	✓	209 S. Love Street
4. Seawalt House	1916-1918	✓	✓	121 E. Jefferson Avenue
5. Commercial Hotel	1918	✓	-	103 S. Love Street
Lovington Historic Commercial District	-	✓	-	-



Historic structures in Downtown Lovington.



2.6 SIDEWALK & STREET CONDITIONS

Current street and sidewalk conditions within the Lovington Downtown MRA are generally in poor to fair condition. The majority of the roads are experiencing poor drainage conditions causing significant cracking, rutting, and potholes. With the exception of Washington and Central Avenue from East Street to Main Street, the majority of sidewalks are missing or are in poor condition and undergoing severe cracking. Many of the sidewalks that are in fair condition are still not ADA compliant (many are lacking ramps). Present and upcoming improvements to streets and sidewalks within the Downtown MRA District include the following:

- NM 18 from Ave D to Jackson Avenue (NMDOT Project)
- Washington Avenue from Main Street to Love Street
- Washington Avenue from Love Street to Eddy Street
- Love Street from Washington Avenue to Central Avenue
- Central Avenue from Love Street to Eddy Street
- Avenue D from Main Street to Eddy Street (NMDOT Project)
- Lea County Judicial Complex Project
- Jefferson Avenue from 2nd Street to Love Street
- Van Buren Avenue from East Street to Eddy Street
- Adams Ave from Main Street to East Street
- Central Ave from 2nd Street to Main Street

Roads in POOR CONDITION are those experiencing cracking with adjacent moderate to high random cracking. Many of the roads in poor condition are also experiencing patching, which is deteriorating as well as rutting located in the wheel path. Roads in FAIR CONDITION are those experiencing cracking with low severity to no random cracks or spalling. Patching may be present; however, it is in good condition. A road in GOOD CONDITION is not experiencing distress or is experiencing minimal distress and is not in need of repair or replacement.

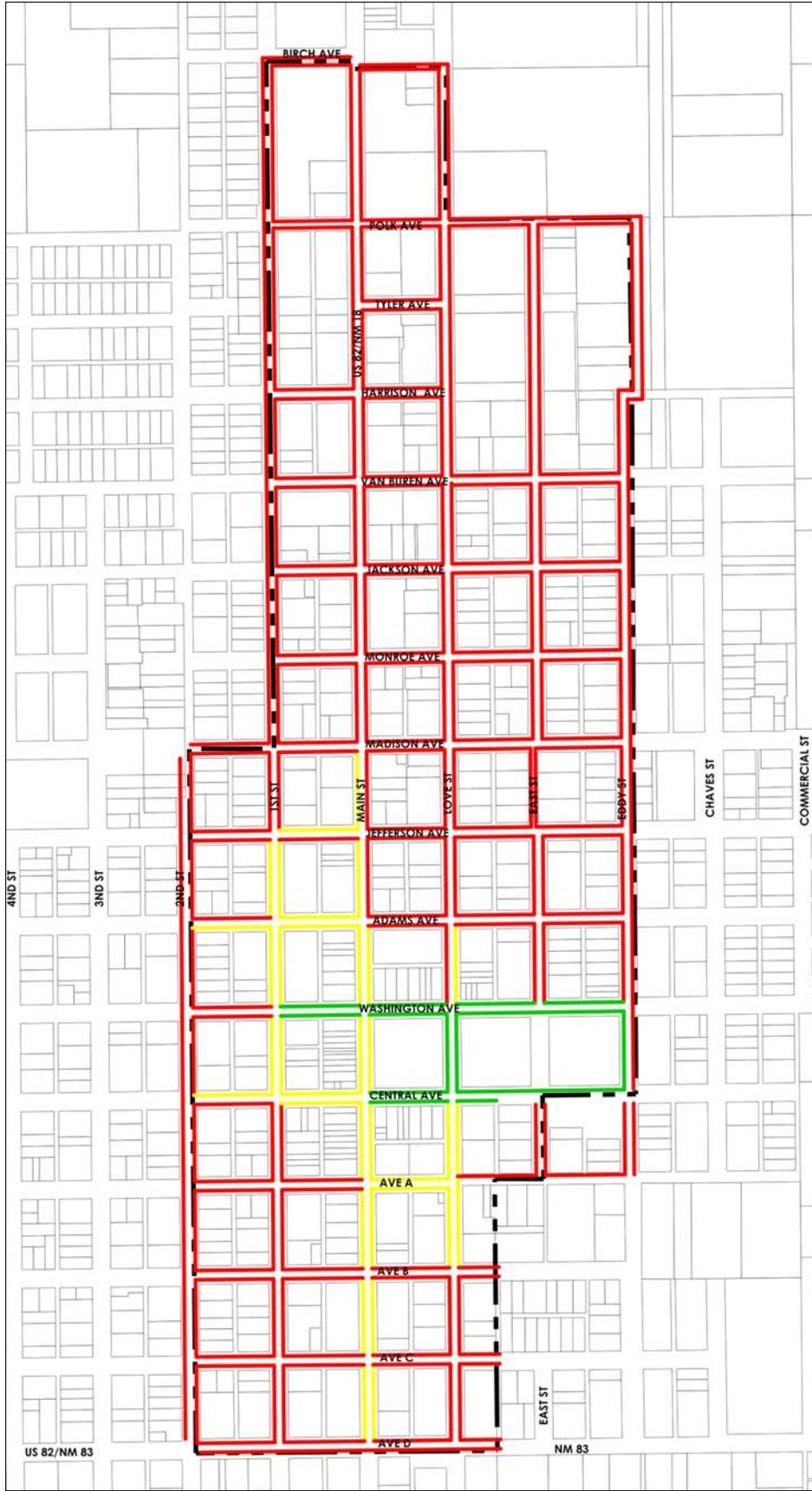


Photos showing deteriorated sidewalk and street conditions.



EXISTING STREET CONDITIONS

- Street in Good Condition
- Street in Fair Condition
- Street in Poor Condition



EXISTING SIDEWALK CONDITIONS

- Sidewalk in Good Condition
- Sidewalk in Fair Condition
- Sidewalk in Poor Condition

DOWNTOWN MRA DISTRICT - STREET AND SIDEWALK EXISTING CONDITIONS

STREET SECTION	SIDEWALK	ROADWAY
2nd Street	From Avenue D to Madison Avenue: missing majority of sidewalks. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From Avenue C to Madison Avenue: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patching.
1st Street	From Avenue D to Central Avenue and from Jefferson Avenue to Birch Avenue: sidewalks and ramps are missing or cracked and lifted.	From Avenue D to Birch Street: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patching.
Main Street	From Madison Avenue to Birch Avenue: missing majority of sidewalk and has cracked ramps.	From Avenue D to Polk Street: road is experiencing ruts, cracks, and patching.
Love Street	From Avenue D to Avenue B and from Washington Avenue to Polk Avenue: missing majority of sidewalk. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From Avenue D to Adams Avenue and from Madison Avenue to Polk Avenue: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes and patching.
East Street	From Avenue A to Central Avenue and from Washington Avenue to Polk Avenue: missing majority of sidewalk. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant. Portion from Central Avenue to Washington Avenue is vacated.	From Avenue D to Polk Avenue: entire road is in poor condition and experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patching. Portion from Central Avenue to Washington Avenue is vacated.
Eddy Street	From Central Avenue to Polk Avenue: no sidewalk present.	From Madison Avenue to Polk Avenue: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patching.
Avenue D	From 2nd Street to Love Street: missing majority of sidewalk. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From 1st Street to Love Street: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patching.
Avenue C	From 2nd Street to Love Street: majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From 2nd Street to Love Street: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patching.
Avenue B	From 2nd Street to Love Street: majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From 2nd Street to Main Street: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Avenue A	From 2nd Street to Main Street and from Love Street to East Street: majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From 2nd Street to Main Street and from Love Street to East Street: road is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.

DOWNTOWN MRA DISTRICT - STREET AND SIDEWALK EXISTING CONDITIONS (CONTINUED)

STREET SECTION	SIDEWALK	ROADWAY
Washington Avenue	From <u>2nd Street to 1st Street</u> : majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From <u>2nd Street to Love Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Adams Avenue	From <u>Main Street to Eddy Street</u> : majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From <u>2nd Street to Main Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Jefferson Avenue	From <u>Main Street to Eddy Street</u> : majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From <u>Love Street to East Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Madison Avenue	From <u>Main Street to Eddy Street</u> : majority of sidewalk is missing. Where sidewalk is present, there is cracking, missing ramps, and is not ADA compliant.	From <u>2nd Street to Main Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Monroe Avenue	From <u>1st Street to Eddy Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	From <u>1st Street to East Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Jackson Avenue	From <u>1st Street to Eddy Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	From <u>1st Street to Love Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Van Buren Avenue	From <u>1st Street to Eddy Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	From <u>1st Street to Love Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Harrison Avenue	From <u>1st Street to Love Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	From <u>Main Street to Love Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Tyler Avenue	From <u>Main Street to Love Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	From <u>Main Street to Love Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Polk Avenue	From <u>Main Street to Eddy Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	From <u>Main Street to Eddy Street</u> : roadway is experiencing ruts, cracking, potholes, and patches.
Birch Avenue	From <u>Main Street to Eddy Street</u> : missing sidewalk on both sides of road.	

2.7 INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to fully understand any potential constraints to redevelopment, it is important to have a grasp on the existing condition and capacity for expansion of the utility systems within the Downtown MRA District. This section provides a broad overview of the water, sanitary sewer, and drainage systems in Downtown Lovington.

WATER SYSTEM

Water lines are located within Birch Avenue and Avenue D. These lines vary widely in size and materials, from 2-inch to 10-inch PVC and cast iron water lines. There is a 16-inch main water line along the US 82/NM 18 from Polk Avenue to Jackson Avenue and extended to the east of the Jackson Avenue and 12-inch main water line along Main Street.

- Birch Avenue to Jackson Avenue: There are 2, 8, and 10-inch lines along the streets, alleys, through properties between Birch and Jackson Avenue with 16-inch main water line along US 82/NM 18 extending from the east of Polk Avenue.
- Jackson Avenue to Avenue D: There are 2, 4, 6, and 8-inch lines along the streets, alleys, through properties between Jackson and Avenue with 12-inch main water line along Main Street from Jackson to Washington Avenue.
- Water and sewer lines cross each other along Polk Avenue to Avenue D, except for Tyler Avenue.

The MRA District appears to be served by water; however, line updates and/or extensions may be required to serve individual site development projects. It is recommended that subsurface utility engineering be conducted in order to verify pipe type, size, and condition prior to new developments and/or roadway construction.

The City of Lovington intends to reconstruct the main line along NM 18 within the MRA District concurrently with the proposed roadway improvements that is under design by the NMDOT and its consultant.

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

Sewer lines are located within Birch Avenue and Avenue D. These lines vary widely in size and materials, from 6-inch to 10-inch sewer lines. There is a 21-inch main sewer line along the Love Street.

- Birch Avenue to Adams Avenue: There are 6 and 8-inch lines along the streets and alleys between Birch and Adams Avenue.
- Adams Avenue to Avenue A: There are 6 and 8-inch sewer lines along the streets, alleys, through properties between Adams Avenue and Avenue A with 10-inch main sewer line along Love Street.
- Avenue A to Avenue D: There are 6-inch sewer line along the streets, alleys, through properties between Avenue A and Avenue D, with a 21-inch main sewer line along Love Street.
- Water and sewer lines cross each other along Polk Avenue to Avenue D, except for Tyler Avenue.

The existing lines should be able to carry any additional flows added due to the new development. Short extensions may be required to serve individual site development plans or redevelopment. It is recommended that utilities be replaced when streets are rebuilt to avoid unnecessary replacement in the future. This will prevent line breaks in the future for newly built streets. Subsurface utility engineering should be conducted in order to verify pipe type, size, and condition prior to new developments and/or roadway construction. Recent projects within the City of Lovington have shown that some branches of the sewer system are shallow and cannot be extended via gravity flow. It is likely that large extensions of this system may require lift stations.



EXISTING WATER SYSTEM

- 1" Water Line
- 2" Water Line
- 4" Water Line
- 6" Water Line
- 8" Water Line
- 10" Water Line
- 12" Water Line
- 16" Water Line



EXISTING SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

- Existing Sewer Line
- Existing Sewer Manhole

STORM DRAINAGE

Currently, there is no underground storm drainage system from Birch Avenue to Avenue C. There are two existing independent storm water systems and two-drop inlets towards the east of Avenue D.

From Birch Avenue to Avenue D, storm flow drainage is north to south along Main Street. Many of the existing structures are undersized or in need of repair or maintenance. The City of Lovington and its consultant, Pettigrew & Associates, are working on the new storm drainage system, which will run along NM 18 / Main Street from W. Birch Avenue to Avenue D and extend to the east of Avenue D to join the existing inlet system. The project will achieve two major improvements; the existing drainage system between Avenue D and Avenue M will be upgraded and the flooding issues on Washington and Jefferson Avenues will be resolved.



CHAPTER 3
MARKET ANALYSIS

3.1 OVERVIEW

The Market Analysis provides a summary of existing conditions that drive current market trends such as demographic and economic conditions, current retail market, and the strengths and weaknesses of the Downtown MRA District. The overall goal of this section is to gain an understanding of the issues affecting the progress of the commercial development in Downtown such as retail climate, tourism, residential and commercial development. The retail gap analysis shows opportunities to expand Downtown retail in specific sectors. It provides guidance on which businesses are most likely to succeed in the Downtown area and demonstrate to potential business owners the advantages of investing and locating Downtown.

The data for the Market Analysis was collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, New Mexico Department of Taxation and Revenue, New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration, New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Lovington Economic Development Corporation, and Environic Analytics. Qualitative data was also derived from interviews with real estate professionals, Lovington MainStreet, and City of Lovington representatives.

3.2 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The City of Lovington experienced strong population growth between 2000 and 2015. The City grew by 21.4% as a whole; the male population increased by 26.1%, while the female population experienced a 16.8% increase. The large difference between the male and female growth can be attributed to the male-dominated employment in oil and natural gas mining, which experienced a strong expansion in the mid-2000s.

As a result of strong growth in the younger cohorts and declining population in the older cohorts, the City's median age declined from 30.6 years in 2000 to 27.8 years in 2015, a 17.2% increase. This is substantially lower than New Mexico as a whole, where the median age

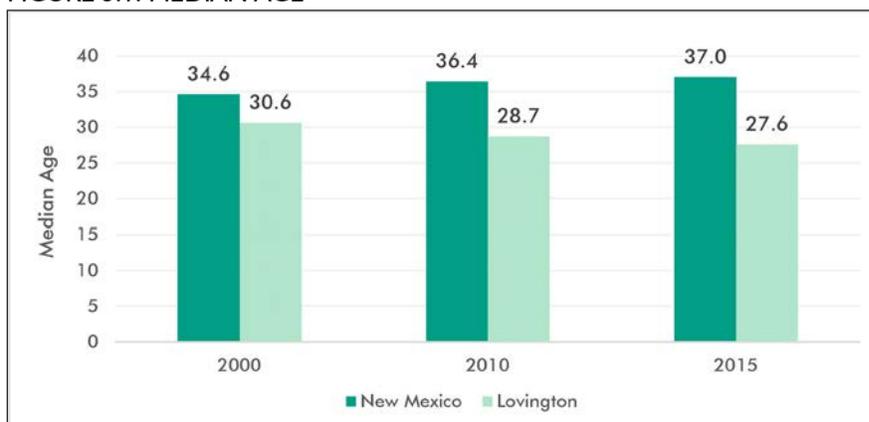
has been steadily increasing, and in 2015, was estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau to be 37.0 years. The lower median age is a good sign of Lovington's capacity for continued growth and provides the foundation for the City to capitalize on providing the services and amenities this population will need and desire in the future.

TABLE 3.1: POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Population	2000	2010	2015	% Change 2000-15*
Total Population	9,471	10,644	11,499	21.4%
Male	4,658	5,460	5,876	26.1%
Female	4,813	5,184	5,623	16.8%
Age				
Under 5 years	8.6%	9.9%	9.9%	15.1%
5 to 9 years	8.7%	8.9%	10.2%	17.2%
10 to 14 years	8.5%	7.9%	9.8%	15.3%
15 to 19 years	9.8%	8.2%	8.0%	-18.4%
20 to 24 years	7.3%	6.7%	7.4%	1.4%
25 to 34 years	12.4%	15.8%	16.9%	73.6%
35 to 44 years	13.4%	12.3%	10.7%	-40.7%
45 to 54 years	11.4%	10.7%	10.2%	-19.6%
55 to 59 years	4.0%	4.8%	4.5%	12.5%
60 to 64 years	3.4%	4.1%	3.3%	-2.9%
65 to 74 years	7.1%	5.6%	3.7%	-97.7%
75 to 84 years	4.1%	3.8%	2.8%	-58.8%
85 years and over	1.5%	1.6%	1.3%	-18.8%
Median Age	30.6	29.9	27.8	17.2%
18 years and over	68.2%	68.2%	65.7%	-3.67%
65 years and over	12.6%	10.4%	9%	-28.57%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 SF1 100% and ACS 2011-2015 5-year estimates.

FIGURE 3.1: MEDIAN AGE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 SF1 100% and ACS 2011-2015 5-year estimates.

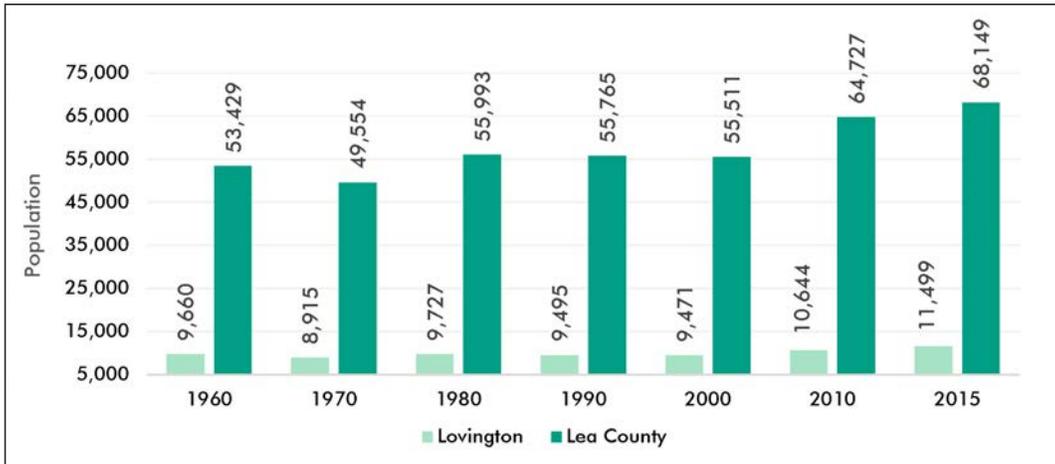
HISTORIC POPULATION

The City of Lovington’s population remained very stable from 1960 to 2000, staying in the low to mid 9,000 range. From 2000-2015, the population grew much more rapidly by nearly 2,000 people (see Figure 3.2). This growth pattern generally mimics Lea County’s overall population growth. The population increases in Lovington and Lea County generally follow the strong production gains in oil and natural gas mining and other energy producing industries.

RACE and ETHNICITY

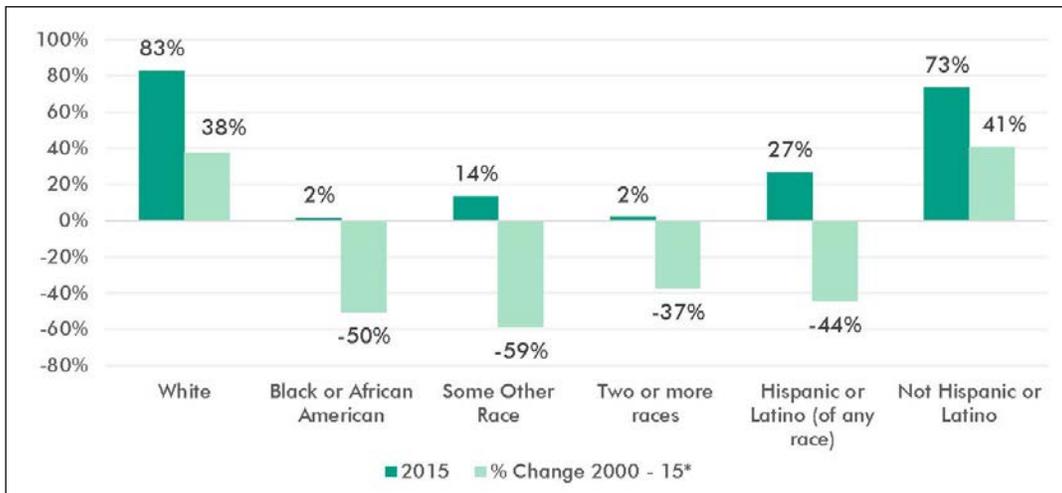
Race and ethnicity, as defined and categorized by the U.S. Census Bureau, are self-identification terms in which residents choose the race or races with which they most closely identify and indicate whether or not they are of Hispanic or Latino origin (ethnicity). The Hispanic or Latino ethnic identity includes people of all races. As shown in Figure 3.3, the majority of Lovington residents in 2015 identified their race as White. In 2000, those who identified as Hispanic or Latino represented 48% of Lovington’s population; by 2015, that number had shrunk to 27%, which is a striking 44% decrease. Lovington currently has a lower Hispanic or Latino population than New Mexico as a whole, which is 46%.

FIGURE 3.2: HISTORIC POPULATION, 1960 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

FIGURE 3.3: RACE and ETHNICITY



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2011-2015, 5-Year estimates.

3.3 ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

INDUSTRY SECTORS & OCCUPATIONS

The City of Lovington's economy is relatively diversified, showing some employment in every industry sector, as shown in Figure 3.4. The primary sector is Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining at 27.2%. The secondary sector is in Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance, at 16.4%. These two sectors make up 43.6% of all employment for residents over 16 years old. The largest difference between New Mexico as a whole and Lovington is in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining, where New Mexico is 23% less than Lovington.

Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance occupations is the largest occupation category in Lovington at 27.7% (see Figure 3.5). Production, Transportation, and Material Moving is the second largest occupational category at 20.9%. This is in contrast to New Mexico, where Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance occupations make up 10.4% of the working population and Production, Transportation, and Material Moving comprise 8.8%. Lovington's role as the county seat is reflective in the occupation categories of Management, Business, Science, and Arts and Sales and Office, which comprises 18.9% of occupations.

FIGURE 3.4: LOVINGTON INDUSTRY SECTORS

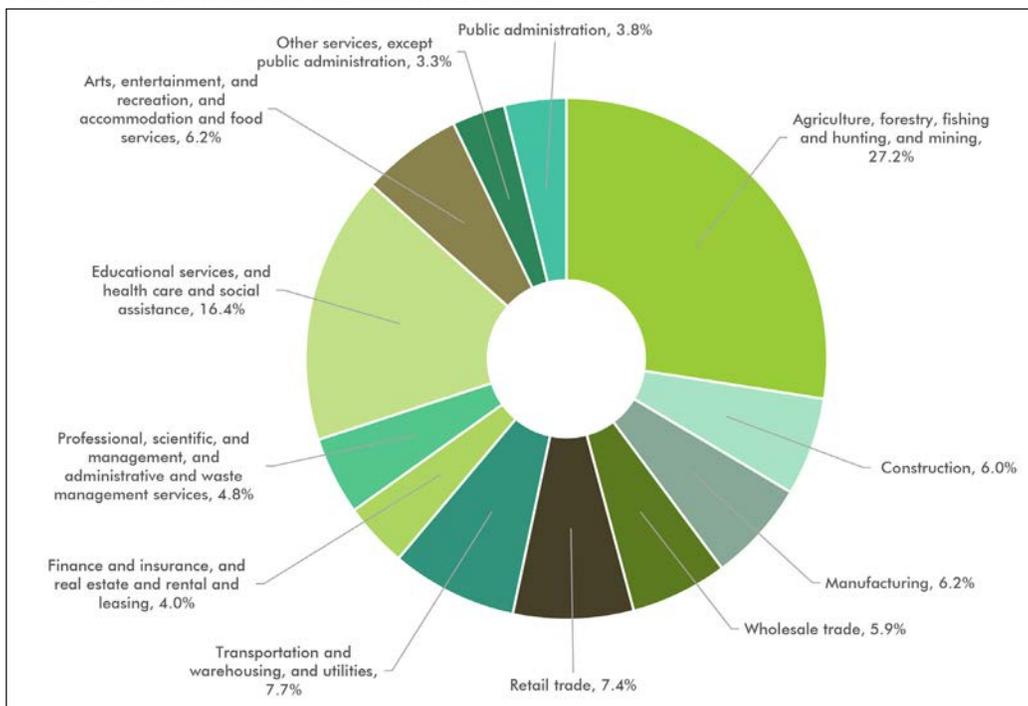
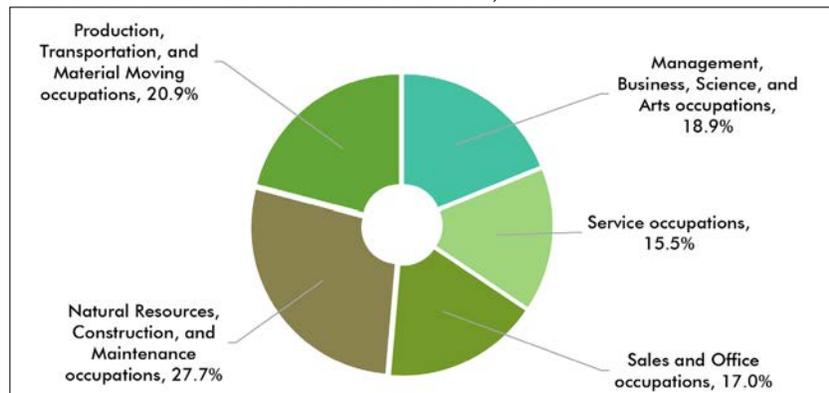


FIGURE 3.5: LOVINGTON OCCUPATIONS, 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates, 2011-2015.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Major employers in Lovington are in several sectors, including education, healthcare, construction, utilities, mining (which includes oil and gas), and technology. Several businesses have opened in Lovington recently, including LEACO, a rural Internet and telephone company; Wildcat Wind, a wind farm operated by Exelon Energy; and Gebo's, a retail store located on Main Street within the Downtown MRA District.

Employer	Category
Lovington Public Schools	Education
Nor-Lea Hospital/Clinic	Health Care
Ferguson Construction Company	Construction
Lea County Electric Cooperative	Utility
Gandy Oilfield Services, Gilbert Lease Services	Mining (Oil and Gas)*
Caprock Pipe and Supply	Mining (Oil and Gas)*
LEACO	Technology / Telecommunications
Navajo Refinery	Mining (Oil and Gas)*

Source: Lea County Chamber of Commerce. *Oil and gas is included under the Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining industry sector.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

In 2015, the median household income in Lovington was approximately \$51,000, significantly higher than that of New Mexico's median income of \$44,963. Figure 3.6 shows that while the state's median income has remained flat, median income in Lovington has been consistently rising, with a nearly \$10,000 increase since 2013. This corresponds with job growth in the energy industry. Energy industry wages, especially in the oil and natural gas mining sector, tend to be higher than other industries in New Mexico. Therefore, Lea County with its strong oil and natural gas production has the second highest median income in New Mexico. Higher wages for the population translate to more opportunities for the City of Lovington to capitalize on a population that has more disposable income to spend in the City.

FIGURE 3.6: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2011 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates 2011-2015.

AVERAGE HOURLY WAGES

Understanding average wages is another important factor in determining the amount of discretionary income the community has to spend at local businesses. Figure 3.7 shows that Lea County is ranked 2nd out of five southeast New Mexico counties in hourly wages at \$25.43 per hour. New Mexico as a whole has an average hourly wage of \$21.63, which is \$3.80 lower than that of Lea County.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

In the first quarter of 2017, the unemployment rate for Lea County was 6.6%, second only to Chaves County

at 6.7%. Lea County's unemployment rate is slightly higher than that of New Mexico, which had a rate of 6.2% during the same time period. Lea County's unemployment has increased since 2012; this again is closely aligned with the fluctuations in the oil and gas industry that has reduced employment and downsized mining activities since 2015. This downturn appears to be waning at present as many oil fields are resuming full production in the Permian Basin and companies, such as Exxon Mobil, are purchasing vast areas of land. Roosevelt and Eddy counties had the lowest unemployment rates in the region at 5.3% and 5.2%, respectively.

FIGURE 3.7: AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE, 2017



Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions.

TABLE 3.3: UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, NOVEMBER 2011 - 2017

County	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
LEA COUNTY	4.7%	4.5%	4.4%	6.2%	6.6%	6.6%
Chaves County	6.2%	6.1%	5.9%	6.4%	6.6%	6.7%
Otero County	6.4%	6.2%	6.2%	5.9%	6.0%	6.1%
Roosevelt County	5.6%	5.6%	5.5%	5.4%	5.7%	5.3%
Eddy County	4.4%	4.5%	4.0%	5.0%	6.5%	5.2%
New Mexico	6.7%	6.8%	6.3%	6.3%	6.4%	6.2%

Source: New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions.

NET TAXABLE PROPERTY VALUES

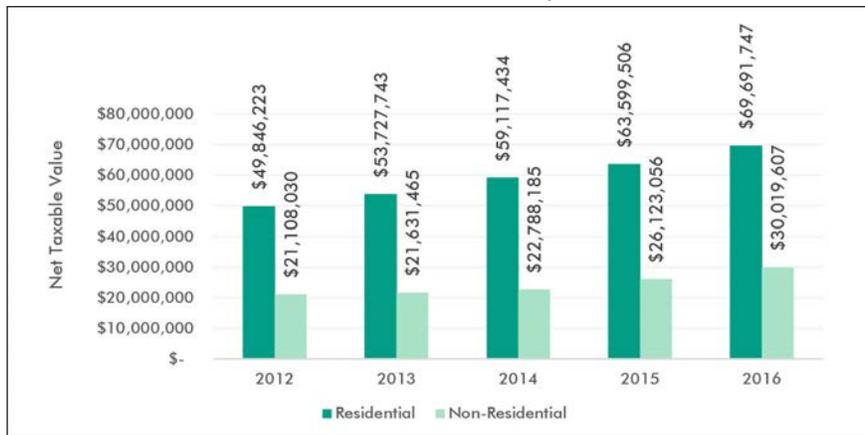
Property values are a strong economic indicator of how well the community is doing. Figure 3.8 illustrates an upward trend between 2012 and 2016 for both residential and non-residential property values. The City of Lovington experienced strong increases in residential net taxable value with an average annual growth rate of 8.7%. Non-residential values showed similar growth with an average annual growth rate of 9.3%. In 2016, the net taxable residential property value in Lovington was \$69,691,747 and the net taxable commercial property value was \$30,019,607.

TAXABLE GROSS RECEIPTS

Gross receipts tax (GRT) is calculated on every transaction that takes place within the City and is a good indication of the City's economic climate. Lovington's current GRT rate is 7.75%.

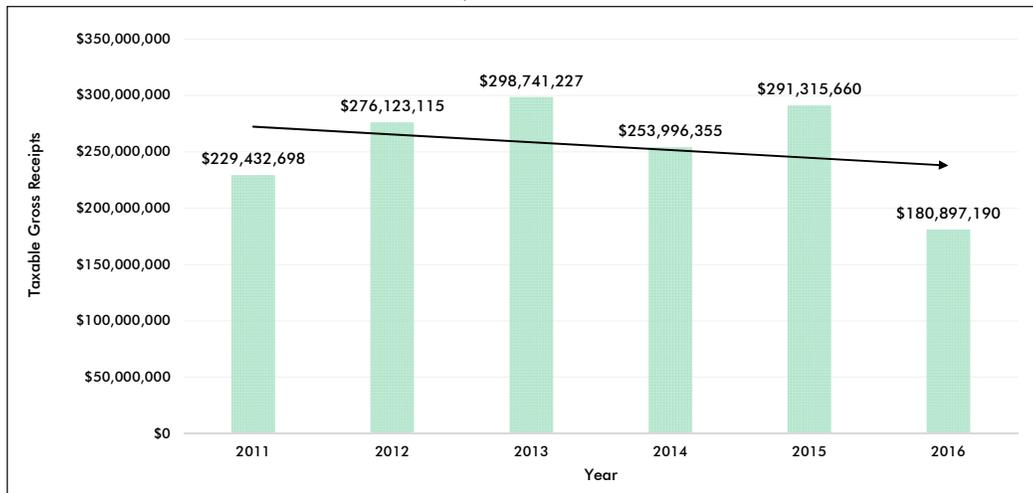
Since 2011, taxable GRT has remained relatively steady in Lovington, but with a significant downturn in 2016. Figure 3.9 shows the highest GRT revenue was in 2013 at \$298,741,227. The lowest GRT revenue was in 2016 at \$180,897,190.

FIGURE 3.8: NET TAXABLE PROPERTY VALUES, 2012 to 2016



Source: New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration.

FIGURE 3.9: TAXABLE GROSS RECEIPTS, 2011 to 2016



Source: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department.

RETAIL OPPORTUNITY GAP ANALYSIS

An important component of analyzing the current retail condition is an understanding of the demand and supply for retail sales, which helps to identify strengths and weaknesses within the Lovington market area. When a “leakage” is evident in a particular retail sector, this information can help guide future business recruitment, expansion, and retention efforts. The Environics Analytics Retail Market Power (RMP) database was used to provide an estimate for the retail opportunity gap for the Lovington MRA District. Retail sales are categorized according to the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS), which is based on how businesses report their gross receipts.

The demand data is derived from the Consumer Expenditure Survey and fielded by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It represents consumer expenditures. The supply data is derived from the Census of Retail Trade, a component of the Economic Census fielded by the U.S. Census Bureau. It represents the retail sales that occurred in the geographic area. When

the demand is greater than the supply, there is an opportunity gap (leakage), which means that local households are spending money outside of the geographic area. Conversely, when the demand is less than the supply, there is an opportunity surplus, meaning that local retailers are attracting sales from residents that live in other geographic areas.

The Downtown MRA District experienced a retail surplus in 2017, which means it was drawing sales into the Downtown from other areas. The area’s demand (consumer expenditures) was \$14,792,657 and the supply (retail sales) was \$27,558,515; an overall surplus of \$12,765,858. The overall surplus is buoyed due to the surplus in Building Material, Garden Equipment Stores; Gasoline Stations; and Health and Personal Care Stores. However, the three retail sales categories most important for a robust Downtown business district include General Merchandise Stores, which showed a opportunity gap of \$629,889; Foodservice and Drinking Places with a gap of \$766,416; and Food and Beverage Stores with a gap of \$1,509,619.

TABLE 3.4: RETAIL MARKET POWER OPPORTUNITY GAP

NAICS Categories	2017 Demand (Consumer Expenditures)	2017 Supply (Retail Sales)	Opportunity Gap/Surplus
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers - 441	\$3,333,150	\$48,459	-\$3,284,691
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores - 442	\$286,112	\$303,010	\$16,898
Electronics & Appliances Stores - 443	\$238,805	\$3,933	-\$234,872
Building Material, Garden Equipment Stores - 444	\$1,585,543	\$11,464,728	\$9,879,185
Food & Beverage Stores - 445	\$1,948,215	\$438,596	-\$1,509,619
Health & Personal Care Stores - 446	\$738,763	\$2,338,962	\$1,600,199
Gasoline Stations - 447	\$913,852	\$8,682,973	\$7,769,121
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores - 448	\$679,021	\$8,831	-\$670,190
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music Stores - 451	\$292,065	\$165,835	-\$126,230
General Merchandise Stores - 452	\$1,650,503	\$1,020,614	-\$629,889
Miscellaneous Store Retailers - 453	\$379,992	\$353,571	-\$26,421
Non-Store Retailers - 454	\$1,257,349	\$2,006,133	\$748,784
Foodservice & Drinking Places - 722	\$1,489,286	\$722,870	-\$766,416
TOTAL RETAIL SALES & EATING, DRINKING PLACES	\$14,792,657	\$27,558,515	\$12,765,858

Source: Environics Analytics, 2017.

3.4 LOVINGTON REAL ESTATE MARKET

Commercial Market

Interviews with real estate professionals that specialize in Downtown Lovington properties provide insight into the dynamics of commercial development in downtown. The following is summary of the information provided:

- The commercial market in Downtown has seen a downturn since the slow down in the oil and natural gas industry began in 2014.
- It is difficult to get local financing right now because of the downturn in Lovington's economy, but that may be changing soon.
- Typical costs per square footage for commercial real estate in the Downtown area averages about \$63 per square feet. The closer to the Courthouse and Main Street Commercial District, the higher the cost for buildings and can reach close to \$91 per square feet.
- Many of the older buildings while beautiful, need repairs that are costly and may deter buyers.

- There are some building owners that want to renovate their buildings, but do not realize the costs involved so they get deterred and give up.
- Within a one block area along Main Street's primary commercial corridor, there are several buildings that are vacant and being used for storage.
- There are a few offices for lease, but no commercial buildings for lease that could be used for retail.

Housing Market

Housing market data was collected from realtor.com, which pulls listings from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and is known as the most accurate source for this data. In November 2017, there were 99 homes listed in Lovington. The median listing price was \$140,000, while the average price per square foot was \$85. Out of these 99 listings, the least expensive house was listed at \$19,900 while the most expensive house was listed at \$1,200,000 and was situated on 277 acres of land. Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of homes by cost and type in the City of Lovington. The majority of houses are 3-bedrooms ranging from \$60,000 to over \$270,000.

Cost	Mobile Home	2-Bed.	3-Bed.	4-Bed.	Total
\$20,000-\$60,000		2	2		4
\$60,001-\$90,000		4	5		9
\$90,001-\$120,000		4	4	1	9
\$120,001-\$150,000	3		12	1	16
\$150,001-\$180,000	1		6	2	9
\$180,001-\$210,000		1	10	3	14
\$210,001-\$240,000			4	1	5
\$240,001-\$270,000			1	3	4
Over \$270,000	1		7	2	10
Total	5	11	51	13	80

As of November 2017.

3.5 MARKET TRENDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Lovington's economy is generally reliant on the oil and gas industry and will likely continue to grow as long as the oil and natural gas production is trending upward in the Permian Basin. In addition to oil and gas, there are a number of trends and opportunities available to the City of Lovington, which are described in this section.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is an important part of Lovington's economy and its identity. Agricultural data is collected at the county level by the U.S.D.A. Census of Agriculture. The agriculture market in Lea County experienced

significant shifts between 2007 and 2012, as shown in Table 3.6. While the number of farms and the land in farms decreased, most notable were the upward shifts in market value of products sold and average net farm income, increases of 102% and 151%, respectively.

Table 3.7 shows sales by commodity and ranking as compared to the other New Mexico counties. Lea County's total value of agricultural products ranked 5th in New Mexico. Its primary agricultural commodity sales were milk from cows at a value of \$115,888,000, 5th in the state, and cattle and calves at a value of \$30,468,000, 7th in the state. Lea County was ranked 1st in the production of cotton and cottonseed at a value of \$14,805,000.

	2007	2012	% Change
Number of Farms	572	460	-20%
Land in Farms (acres)	2,365,168	1,981,988	-16%
Average Size of Farm (acres)	4,135	4,309	4%
Market Value of Products Sold	\$93,644,000	\$188,926,000	102%
Average Net Farm Income	\$163,713	\$410,708	151%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Census of Agriculture, 2007 and 2012.

Commodity	Value	State Rank
Total value of agricultural products sold	\$188,926,000	5
Value of crops including Nursery and Greenhouse	\$40,738,000	5
Value of Livestock, Poultry, and their Products	\$148,188,000	5
Grain, Oilseeds, Dry beans, and Dry peas	(D)	7
Tobacco	-	-
Cotton and Cottonseed	\$14,805,000	1
Fruits, Tree Nuts, and Berries	\$793,000	8
Nursery, Greenhouse, Floriculture, and Sod	\$411,000	11
Cut Christmas trees and Short rotation woody crops	-	-
Other Crops and Hay	\$9,812,000	7
Poultry and Eggs	(D)	(D)
Cattle and Calves	\$30,468,000	7
Milk from Cows	\$115,888,000	5
Hogs and Pigs	(D)	(D)
Sheep, Goats, Wool, Mohair, and Milk	\$119,000	7
Horses, Ponies, Mules, Burros, and Donkeys	\$948,000	7
Aquaculture	-	-
Other Animals and Other Animal Products	\$757,000	5

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Census of Agriculture, 2007 and 2012.

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

The top five crops in Lea County by acreage in 2012 were cotton; forage-land used for hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop; corn for silage; and wheat for grain, as shown in Table 3.8. In 2012, Lea County had the most acreage in cotton of all counties in New Mexico, with 19,589 acres.

In 2012, livestock inventory was the most lucrative agricultural sector in Lea County. In 2012, the County had 84,950 head of cattle and calves, and was ranked 4th of all counties in the state.

COMMERCIAL RETAIL and SERVICES

As previously mentioned, the three primary retail opportunities for Downtown - General Merchandise Stores, Foodservice and Drinking Places, and Food and Beverage Stores - are all showing significant retail leakage, illustrating the opportunity for growth in these retail sectors. Drylands Brewing Company, which opened in 2017 on Main Street, is an excellent example of a Downtown “Foodservice and Drinking Place” that was the result of a public/private partnership with the City of Lovington. These are the types of businesses the City of Lovington and Lovington MainStreet should focus on in their recruitment efforts, particularly towards local small entrepreneurs that are tuned into the culture and identity of the City. Local taprooms and breweries



Lazy 6 Restaurant at 102 S. 1st Street.

are a growing trend and can more easily link to nearby agricultural producers providing a fully local experience that can utilize and grow the local supply chain keeping dollars closer to home.

In addition to retail shops, there are opportunities for an additional hotel and other lower intensity commercial services to locate within the Downtown MRA District. This is particularly evident along the north end of Main Street where there are a number of larger vacant parcels that would be suitable for redevelopment and would be in proximity to the Nor-Lea Hospital District which brings residents and other people into the community.

Crops	Acreage	State Rank
Cotton, all	19,589	1
Forage-land used for all hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop	16,892	9
Corn for silage	9,738	3
Wheat for grain, all	3,282	6

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Census of Agriculture, 2012.

* (D) Withheld information to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

Livestock	Quantity	State Rank
Cattle and Calves	84,950	4
Horses and Ponies	1,952	8
Sheep and Lambs	1,475	12
Rabbits, live	437	1
Layers	407	21

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Census of Agriculture, 2012.

ENERGY INDUSTRY

Lea County and the City of Lovington's economy has historically been heavily dependent on the oil and natural gas industry. Recognizing the need for more economic diversity, the County has capitalized on its strengths as an energy production region and has attracted energy producing nuclear and renewable industries, in addition to oil and natural gas. This has created an economy that is less affected by the volatility of the oil and natural gas industry and more resilient to changes that affect this industry's output.

Oil and Natural Gas Industry

Lea County sits on the western edge of the Permian Basin, one of the largest oil fields in North America. Employment in the oil fields drives the economy in southeastern New Mexico. The oil and natural gas

industry is highly volatile, with fluctuating high and low production based on many factors often outside the control of the local area. This has dramatic effects on the area's population, employment, and wages. Recent lower costs per barrel for oil and natural gas globally has caused the industry to pullback on production. This trend appears to be reversing with prices bouncing back. Tables 3.10 and 3.11 show the amount of oil and gas production in the eight highest oil and gas producing counties in New Mexico. Almost all counties are showing less production from 2015 to 2016, with the exception of Lea and Eddy counties. Lea County experienced an increase of 12.7% in oil production and an increase in natural gas production of 26.7%. Businesses related to the oil and gas industry are located within the Downtown MRA District, which is permitted despite their generally high intensity use.

County (2016 Rank)	Oil Barrels (2015)	Oil Barrels (2016)	% Change
LEA (1)	52,770,125	59,467,936	12.7%
Eddy (2)	49,354,149	52,030,275	5.4%
San Juan (3)	3,285,911	2,479,529	-24.5%
Rio Arriba (4)	2,098,999	1,319,526	-37.1%
Sandoval (5)	1,628,196	923,725	-43.3%
Chaves (6)	988,828	663,022	-32.9%
Roosevelt (7)	136,225	125,361	-8.0%
Mckinley (8)	21,060	9,629	-54.3%

Source: New Mexico Oil Conservation Division Annual Report, 2015-2016.

County (2016 Rank)	Gas Per Thousand CF (2015)	Gas Per Thousand CF (2016)	% Change
Eddy (1)	231,545,471	264,179,442	14.1%
San Juan (2)	303,341,133	248,602,962	-21.9%
LEA (3)	168,674,888	213,631,265	26.7%
Rio Arriba (4)	203,795,517	195,676,187	-4.0%
Colfax (5)	16,894,338	14,082,997	-16.6%
Chaves (6)	13,658,860	11,476,505	-16.0%
Sandoval (7)	10,397,220	8,246,133	-20.7%
Roosevelt (8)	-	1,010,683	N/A
Mckinley (N/A)	122,726	-	N/A

Source: New Mexico Oil Conservation Division Annual Report, 2015-2016.

Nuclear Energy

Nuclear energy and related services have a significant role in the Permian Basin region energy economy. Spurred by the URENCO Plant located in Eunice, New Mexico and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant, located in Eddy County, other companies in the nuclear industry such as International Isotopes, Inc. and Waste Control Services have located in the area citing the hot dry climate as ideal for nuclear energy development and waste management. Most of the communities in the region have supported these companies, which are a stable source of reliable high-income employment.

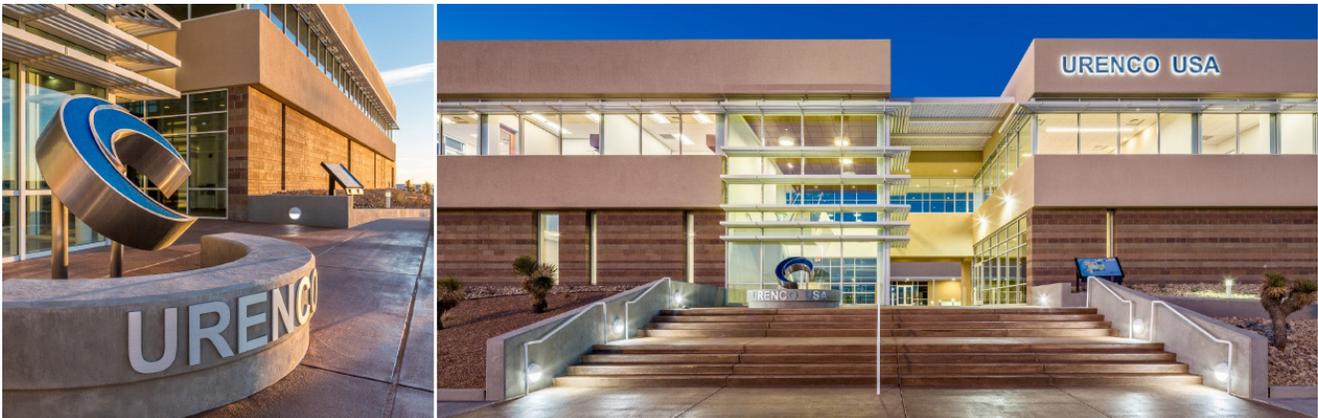
Since opening in 2010, URENCO has become the largest nuclear energy industry employer in Lea County. URENCO was the first enrichment facility to be built in the United States in 30 years and the first ever to use centrifuge enrichment technology. This technology is a low energy consumption process, which is an important advantage in the uranium enrichment field. At its current capacity, URENCO provides one third of the U.S. demand for enrichment service. Since its opening

in 2010, URENCO facilities have grown and continue to increase production of enriched uranium. At present, there are 240 people employed at URENCO.

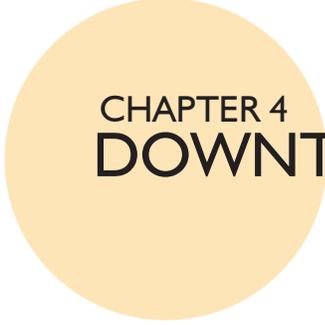
Renewable Energy

With southern New Mexico ranked as one of the top ten states for wind and solar potential, Lea County has worked to be a leader in renewable power generation. The Lovington area is home to several wind farms, including Anderson Wind Farm (located just west Lovington) and Wild Cat Wind Farm, which is operated by Exelon Generation and recently located offices in Lovington. The power generated from these wind farms goes directly to the Lea County Electric Cooperative system.

Onyx Renewable Partners L.P., is currently in the final stages of construction of the Middle Daisy Solar array site. The site is comprised of 22,000 solar panels and will generate enough electricity to supply 1,000 to 2,000 in Lea County. The project is anticipated to create 50 to 60 new jobs.



URENCO in Eunice, NM. Source: Dekker, Perich, Sabatini web site.



CHAPTER 4
DOWNTOWN VISION

4.1 DOWNTOWN VISION and GOALS

The Lovington community is dedicated to making Downtown Lovington a fun and attractive place to shop, walk, grab a bite to eat, or participate in a community event. Anchoring Downtown is the historic Lea County Courthouse and its beautiful landscaped grounds, Central Plaza area, Lea Theater, and the Lea Museum. Municipal and County offices bring employees and visitors into the area during the day, but at night there is little activity. The area is overburdened with vacant storefronts and vacant properties that could be filled by a host of appropriate commercial businesses that would enhance and better serve the community. The City of Lovington and Lovington MainStreet have successfully worked together to bring positive changes to Downtown; however, much more work lies ahead for all the community stakeholders to ensure the following vision and goals for Downtown Lovington comes to fruition:

“As you enter Downtown Lovington, it is clear that you have arrived in a special place. Downtown gateways welcome you to the area and signs point you to areas of interest. The entire area is easy to walk, bike, or drive, and you feel safe being in Downtown at any time of day. As you walk along Main Street and the Central Avenue area, you are struck by the beautiful historic Lea County Courthouse and all of the storefronts along Main Street that have been restored. Most of the businesses are locally-owned, offer a wide range of commercial goods and services, and are buzzing with shoppers. The store owners and employees are friendly and accommodating. The Lea Theater provides the cultural hub for Downtown with events and performances scheduled throughout the year. Outdoor events are taking place at the Fran Atchley Plaza and the new amphitheater at Avenue A. People live Downtown so that they are close to where they work. There are activities and events that are geared towards young people, adults, and families. Downtown Lovington has truly become a great American Main Street”.

Goal 1: Downtown Lovington is a destination for both residents and visitors, and is abuzz with a diverse mix of small retail businesses, restaurants with outdoor seating, coffee shops, hotels, multi-family developments, and the new Judicial Complex.

Goal 2: Downtown buildings have been preserved through redevelopment and adaptive reuse. New buildings have been built on the previously vacant properties.

Goal 3: Main Street has been improved with new lighting, wide sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, and a slower travel speed. Streets and sidewalks throughout the district have been improved.

Goal 4: Community events and celebrations are taking place along Main Street, Avenue A, and Love Street, south of Central Avenue. Fran Atchley Plaza has been restored and a small amphitheater that hosts performances has been built on a vacant lot at Main Street and Avenue A. The Library Parklet hosts activities that are geared towards children.

Goal 5: Heavy commercial activity in Downtown has been relocated to appropriately zoned properties and land use conflicts have been eliminated.



4.2 REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

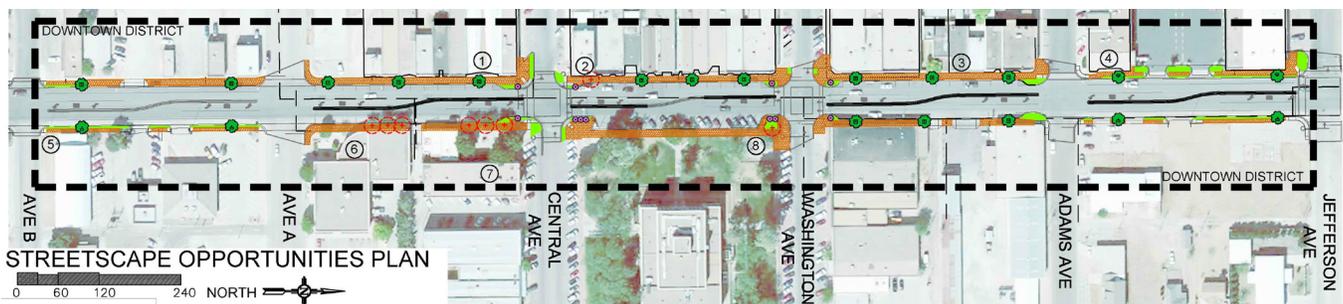
The intent of the Downtown Lovington Redevelopment Scenario is to provide the structure to guide the City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, and other community stakeholders in pursuing the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings and properties within the Downtown MRA district. The Redevelopment Scenario is based on the input received from participants in the two-day workshop, business owner and general public surveys, and stakeholder interviews, as well as professional land use and urban design practices. The Redevelopment Scenario illustrates preferred land uses, and locates both redevelopment projects that have been prioritized for their potential as catalysts for private investment and public sector investments that are critical to the successful redevelopment of Downtown Lovington. Preferred locations for wayfinding elements, public event areas, a trail connection, and modifications to the roadways are also illustrated on the Redevelopment Scenario. Sections 4.3 to 4.5 provide a description, and where appropriate, a development concept for the recommended priority redevelopment projects, public investment projects, and support actions. The Implementation and Funding Sources section contains the responsible entity(s) for each project or action and the potential funding source.

A related and important component of the Redevelopment Scenario is the ongoing design and

implementation of the roadway improvements to Main Street by the NMDOT. The improvements are anticipated to include widening of the sidewalks, bulb-outs at intersections, improved pedestrian crossings, and landscaping. There is on-going coordination between the consultant team for the NMDOT project and the Downtown MRA Plan to ensure there is a common understanding of the goal that Main Street become a slower moving, pedestrian oriented facility, particularly within the several blocks of the Downtown core between Jefferson Avenue and Avenue B.

The Redevelopment Scenario locates a number of directional signs primarily along Main Street, and also along Central Avenue, 1st Street, and Love Street. A kiosk is shown at the corner of Main Street and Central Avenue within the Fran Atchley Plaza.

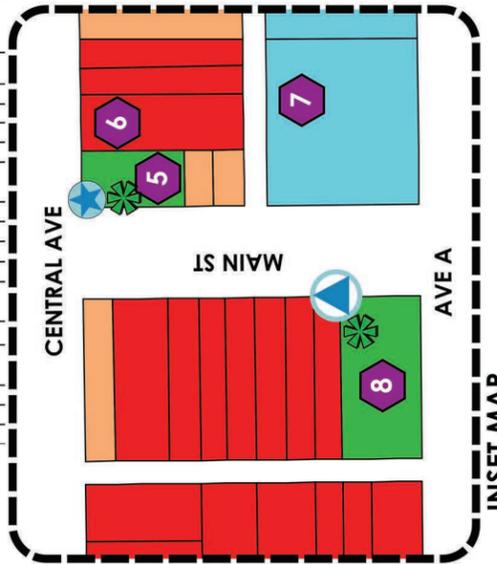
The preferred land uses are based upon existing land use and sound land use practices. Main Street is established as the commercial corridor and the Redevelopment Scenario identifies two commercial sites for new development along Main Street. Residential land use is shown on the side streets, primarily in the northern area of the MRA District along East Street, Love Street, and Eddy Street. There is ample opportunity in these areas for new affordable housing projects and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock. The Redevelopment Scenario identifies one site along Love Street for multi-family development.



NMDOT project concept (draft), Coleman & Associates.

LEGEND

- ⊕ EXISTING TREE TO REMAIN
- PROPOSED SHADE TREE
- PROPOSED SMALL TREE
- PROPOSED BRICK SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED LANDSCAPE AREA
- PROPOSED TREE GRATE
- ◻ PROPOSED HALF TREE GRATE



City of Lovington Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan

REDEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Office
- Institutional/Government
- Parks/Plaza

Features

- Public Art
- Public Events Area
- Opportunity Sites
 1. New Hotel/Commercial Site
 2. New Multi-family Site
 3. New Commercial Site
 4. Main Street Cafe Building
 5. Fran Atchley Plaza
 6. Lea Theater
 7. New Library Parklet
 8. New Event Space

Wayfinding

- Gateway
- Kiosk
- Directional Sign

Wayfinding

- Downtown Core
- Multi-Use Trail
- Expanded MRA
- New Road

Downtown Metropolitan Redevelopment Area Plan Boundary

Prepared by:
 Consensus Planning, Inc.
 302 8th Street NW
 Albuquerque, NM 87102

Prepared for:
 City of Lovington
 214 S. Love
 Lovington, NM 88260

Lovington MainStreet
 201 S Main St
 Lovington, NM 88260

LOVINGTON
 LEASERS/REDEVELOPER



4.3 REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

HOTEL/COMMERCIAL SITE ON MAIN STREET

This site is located between Main Street and 1st Street, north of Harrison Avenue. The property is approximately 2.4-acres in size and privately-owned. It is bisected by an undeveloped, but platted alley with power lines. There is currently a small, vacant building on the site, but is otherwise undeveloped.

This site is relatively large as compared to other properties within Downtown Lovington. Due to its size, and the need for additional hotels within the Downtown area, it has great potential for redevelopment and investment by the private sector. The property is large enough to accommodate a hotel and several pad sites, with associated parking. The concept below shows the



Vacant site at Main Street and Harrison Avenue.

hotel at the rear of the property, but visible from Main Street, and commercial buildings adjacent to the public sidewalk. One driveway access is provided from Main Street and two driveways are from Harrison Avenue. Outdoor patio space is provided (see concept below).



MULTI-FAMILY SITE ON LOVE STREET

This site is located between Love Street and East Street, south of Polk Avenue. The property is approximately 2.5-acres in size, vacant, and privately-owned.

This site is relatively large as compared to other properties within Downtown Lovington. It is recommended for a new multi-family project due to its location, need for new housing in the area, and the preferred land use being residential.

The concept below shows a layout of townhouse style apartments at a moderate density of 18 dwelling units per acre. Each of the buildings include five units. Each unit has its own driveway and garage. The garages are on the ground floor, with two floors of living space above. Additional surface parking is provided for guests.



Vacant site at Love Street and Polk Avenue.

A central common landscaped area is provided, with a shade structure and play space. Landscaping is provided throughout the site and along each of the three street frontages. A wrought iron fence is shown around the site perimeter and the project is gated (see concept below).



COMMERCIAL SITE ON MAIN STREET

This site is located on the south side of Main Street between Jackson Avenue and Monroe Avenue. The property is approximately 1-acre in size, vacant, and privately-owned. This site is recommended for a new commercial development due to its visible location along Main Street. The preferred land use per the Redevelopment Scenario is commercial.

The concept below shows a layout with two commercial buildings that could be used for restaurants, commercial retail, or a combination of the two uses. The larger of the two buildings is situated close to the intersection, with direct access from the public sidewalk. It could accommodate one large space or several shop spaces. A shared outdoor plaza space with a tensile fabric shade structure is provided between the two buildings. Outdoor plaza space is also shown along the Main Street edge. One driveway access is shown from Main Street and one from Monroe Avenue (see concept below).

REDEVELOP MAIN STREET CAFE BUILDING

The Main Street Cafe building is located on the northeast corner of Main Street and Washington Avenue. It is a relatively large, 1-story brick building with storefront windows, a main entry that faces the intersection, and shop space with individual doors moving north along Main Street. The exterior of the building appears to be in relatively good condition. The Main Street Cafe building is identified as a priority



Vacant site at Main Street and Monroe Avenue.

redevelopment project due to its prominent location on Main Street and its potential as a multi-tenant, mixed restaurant/retail development.



Main Street Cafe Building.

4.4 PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENTS

REVITALIZE FRAN ATCHLEY PLAZA

The Fran Atchley Plaza is located in a very visible location at the corner of Main Street and Central Avenue, adjacent to the historic Lea Theater and across the street from the Lea County Courthouse Square. The condition of the Plaza has deteriorated over time and there is a need for significant improvements. As currently configured, it is not inviting or well suited for small public gatherings. As one of the only outdoor gathering spaces in Downtown Lovington, and as identified in the community surveys and the workshop, it is a priority for the City and Lovington MainStreet to improve the Plaza.

Lovington MainStreet and New Mexico MainStreet have planned and coordinated on an incremental approach to improving Fran Atchley Plaza due to funding



Existing condition of Fran Atchley Plaza.

constraints. However, the desire is for a more complete improvement project once more funding is available. The concept below shows new paving with a inscription dedication to Fran Atchley, a raised planter with a location for public art, mural space on the west facade of the Lea Theater, a curved trellis shade structure with picnic tables, street trees, and seat walls.



CREATE NEW EVENT SPACE @ MAIN STREET and AVENUE A

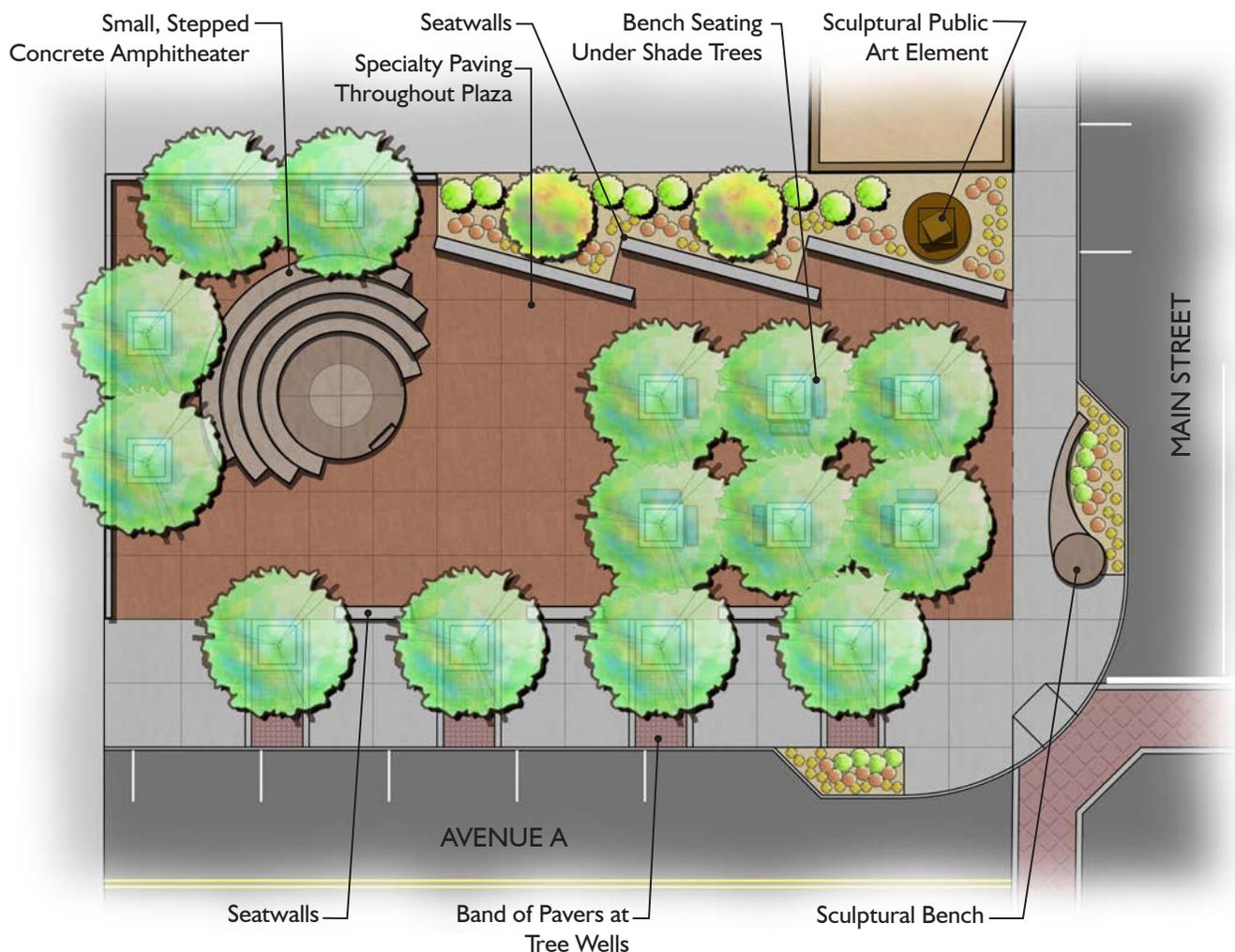
As previously noted, there is very little outdoor gathering spaces within the Downtown MRA District, particularly since the Courthouse Square is no longer available for community events. The vacant parcel at the northeast corner of Main Street and Avenue A is an excellent location for a small event space within the Downtown core area. The property is privately-owned, so the City would need to pursue acquisition in order to create this community amenity.

The outdoor event area, as shown below, is designed to accommodate small performances and be a respite from the summer heat. The concept is for a plaza that features a small, stepped concrete amphitheater designed to accommodate approximately 70 people.



Vacant site at Main Street and Avenue A.

Shade trees are provided within the hardscaped area of the plaza as well as along the street edge of Avenue A, around the rear of the amphitheater, and in the planter area along the north edge. An area is set aside for a public art installation (see concept below and on following page).





Rendering of proposed event space at Main Street and Avenue A.

IMPROVE LEA THEATER

The historic Lea Theater is a tremendous community asset and anchor for Downtown Lovington. The City of Lovington wisely purchased the Lea Theater in 2014 with the goal that it become a cultural facility. It is currently operated by the City of Lovington.

Recognizing the Lea Theater as a catalytic economic driver for the community, the New Mexico Economic Development Department awarded \$100,000 in LEDA funds through the New Mexico MainStreet's Historic Theater Initiative for infrastructure improvements that would allow first-run digital films

to be shown. In 2017, the Lea Theater received a donation of 250 seats from a Texas theater chain. The original seats were removed and sold to people interested in owning a piece of Lovington's history.

The continued rehabilitation of the Lea Theater is recognized by the Downtown MRA Plan as an important catalytic project. The City of Lovington should continue this effort towards making the Lea Theater a cultural facility and pursuing additional funding for full restoration of the neon sign and marquee. Coordination with New Mexico MainStreet's Historic Theater Initiative should also be continued.



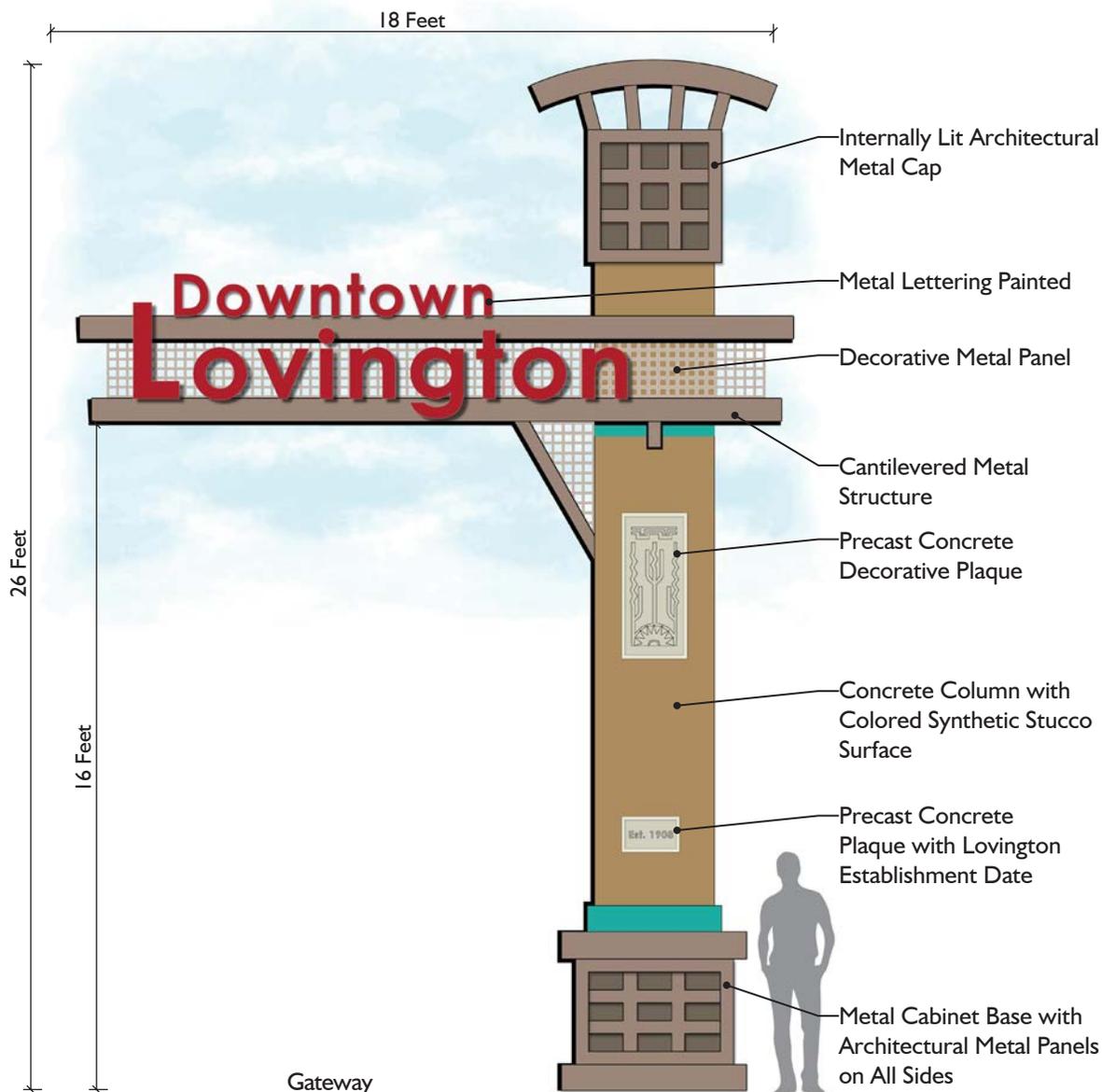
Left: Front facade of the Lea theater facing Central Avenue; Right: Ticket booth at the entry to the Lea Theater.

CREATE A DOWNTOWN WAYFINDING PROGRAM

There is no existing wayfinding or signage program in the Downtown MRA district. Travelers “discover” Downtown Lovington as they drive through it and notice a different building and development pattern once they get to about Central Avenue. Developing a wayfinding program with a coordinated set of gateways, directional signage, and kiosks with common colors, materials, and fonts would add a common theme to Downtown Lovington, which is currently bereft of these urban design elements. This would have a significant positive impact on Downtown Lovington and would be the beginning of a branding program. The

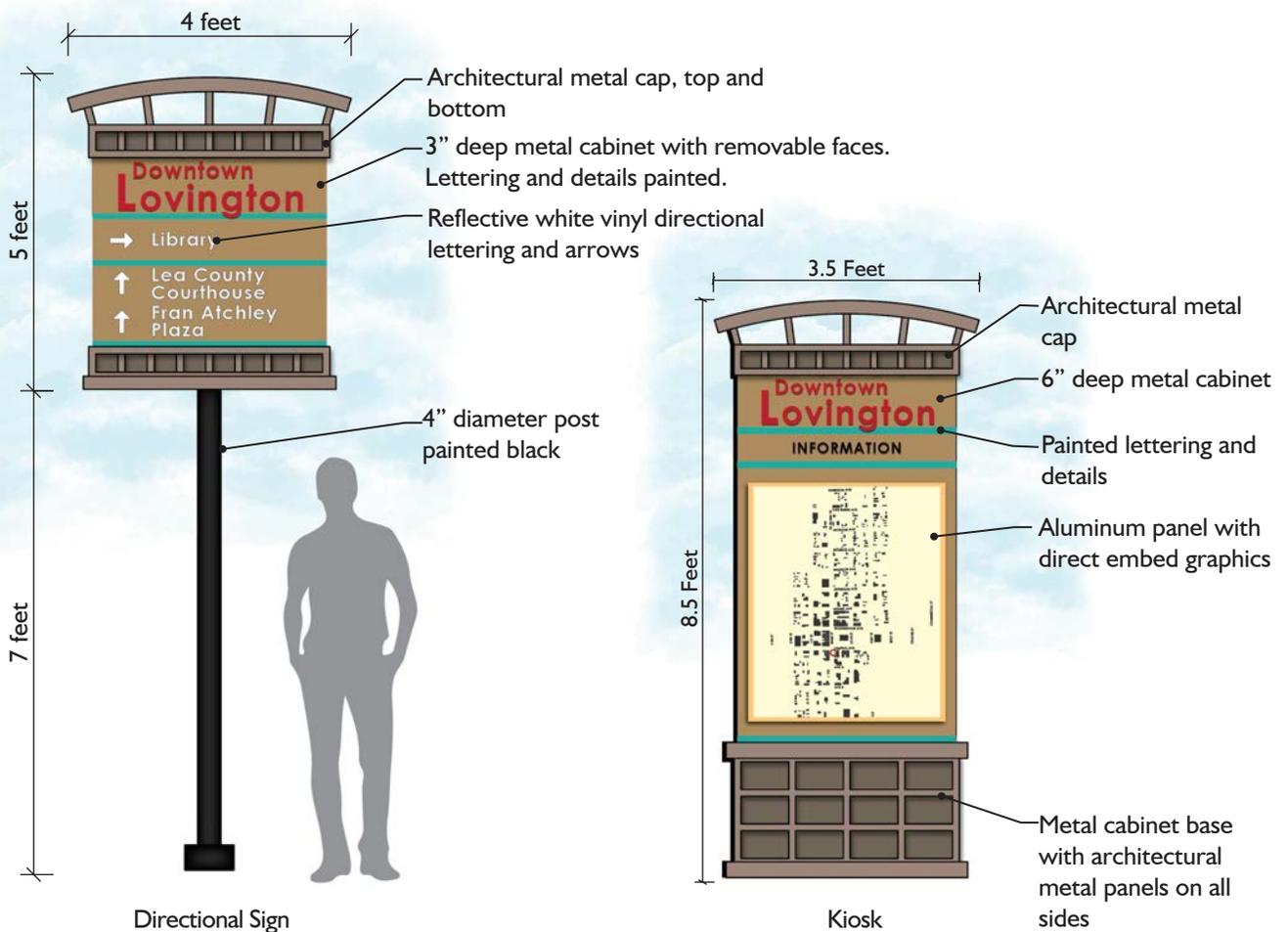
Redevelopment Scenario recommends locations for the following wayfinding elements:

- Gateways: Gateways are markers that would be placed on Main Street at the two major entries to the Downtown core district. The gateways are designed to let visitors know that they are entering Downtown and to expect a higher concentration of pedestrians and to slow their driving speed. Two pairs of gateways are recommended for Downtown Lovington - one set at Jefferson Street at the north entry and one set at Avenue B at the south entry. Accent colors on the gateways are consistent with Lovington MainStreet colors (see gateway concept below).



- **Directional Signs:** Directional signs should highlight visitor destinations, such as the Lea County Courthouse, Lea Theater, Lea Museum, Lovington Library, Fran Atchley Plaza, etc. Most of the directional signs are recommended along Main Street, and a few are recommended along the side streets of Central Avenue, 1st Street, and Love Street. The directional signs are designed to complement the gateways by using similar materials and matching colors (see *Directional Sign concept below, left side*).

- **Kiosks:** Kiosks provide the opportunity to inform visitors about what Downtown Lovington has to offer by illustrating the attractions on a mounted map. A kiosk is recommended for the corner of Main Street and Central Avenue, within Fran Atchley Plaza. The kiosk is designed to be consistent with the directional signs and complementary to the gateways (see *Kiosk concept below, right side*).



CREATE A LIBRARY PARKLET

This project includes the conversion of the small employee parking lot behind the Lovington Library into an outdoor parklet/reading room, interim improvements to Fran Atchley Plaza, and a painted “literary trail” to connect the two public green spaces. The outdoor reading room will include a grass area and flexible seating to accommodate larger group events and individual reading practice while providing important public open space adjacent to the heart of Downtown Lovington. Interim improvements to Fran Atchley Plaza will improve accessibility, provide additional seating, upgrade the plaza signage, provide additional visual interest with added plantings, and include a raised stage area for events. The “literary trail”, which will be painted on the ground at the parking lot adjacent to the Lea Theater, will tie the two spaces together, provide a fun reference to the Library, and highlight the importance of youth activity in Downtown Lovington (see concept below by New Mexico MainStreet and Groundworks Studio).

IMPROVE SIDEWALK/STREET CONDITIONS & LIGHTING

The streets, sidewalks, and ADA ramps within the Downtown MRA District are in significant need of improvement, as described and illustrated in Section 2: Asset Inventory. These conditions contribute to a run-down appearance of Downtown Lovington and in some instances, discourages the private sector to invest in the area. While the NMDOT project for Main Street will address sidewalk, street, and ADA issues on Downtown’s primary corridor, the existing conditions on adjacent streets are generally poor to fair.

The City of Lovington should develop a street and sidewalk improvement plan to systematically replace deteriorated sidewalks, install sidewalks and ADA ramps where they current do not exist, chip seal or replace streets, where appropriate, and install additional street lighting that is coordinated in style and color with other street furniture. Street improvements should be done in conjunction with any utility improvements that are needed.



4.5 SUPPORT ACTIONS

AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE

The City of Lovington's Zoning Ordinance is significantly inadequate to meet the goals for revitalization of Downtown and the community in general. The Zoning Ordinance needs a complete overhaul to ensure it protects health, safety, and welfare of the community and generally implements the City of Lovington Comprehensive Plan. There are a limited number of existing zoning districts, and of these districts, each falls short of what a typical zoning district should address in terms of use and development standards.

Almost the entire Downtown MRA district is zoned C. Currently, any commercial use that is not specifically prohibited in the C zone is permitted. While the C zone currently allows a wide range of low to heavy intensity commercial uses to locate throughout Downtown, it also allows single family residential, which is not appropriate for Downtown and causes conflicts between incompatible land uses. This is an unusual method of regulating land uses and it has led to a patchwork of incompatible uses in areas of Downtown Lovington. The existing Zoning Ordinance does not contain a specific zone designed for multifamily apartments, even though there has been at least one new multi-family project near the Nor-Lea Hospital and there is interest in creating an affordable housing project within the Downtown MRA district.

The updated Zoning Ordinance should include a clear set of permissive and conditional uses, and reasonable development standards that regulate building height, setbacks, buffering, landscaping, and parking. In particular, the commercial zone for Downtown Lovington should be designed to encourage lower intensity commercial uses that would be appropriate for and conducive to creating an inviting, walkable shopping district and exclude heavy commercial uses, such as gas stations, truck and auto-related sales, repair, and storage, industrial, etc., that detract from that goal. A component of amending the Zoning Ordinance should be to amend the zoning map to reflect the desired land uses for the Downtown MRA district.

IMPROVE BUILDING FACADES

Facilitating improvements to building facades is a cost effective and impactful action that would improve the Downtown business district and encourage other building owners to follow suit. Lovington MainStreet should organize this effort with willing building owners and with design assistance provided by New Mexico MainStreet. A "facade squad" should focus on two or three buildings along Main Street (preferably on one block) by painting, fixing windows and doors, install new awnings, and other minor cosmetic repairs. Lovington MainStreet should take the initiative to solicit donations of materials and volunteers to broaden involvement in this effort to improve Downtown.



Photosimulation of facade improvements along Main Street.

ON-GOING DIALOGUE WITH DOWNTOWN BUSINESS OWNERS

Lovington MainStreet should engage in and maintain an on-going dialogue with Downtown business owners regarding their priorities and needs. This should include educating and being a pipeline of information on available tax incentives, grant and loan programs, and potential private investor groups. Having discussions with owners at their places of businesses is an effective way of maintaining communication, learning how best to assist the businesses, and demonstrating that Lovington MainStreet is an advocate for the Downtown business district.

DEVELOP A BUILDING AND BUSINESS INVENTORY

Lovington MainStreet should develop and maintain an inventory of Downtown businesses, building conditions, and vacant buildings and properties. The inventory will provide a better understanding of the local business climate and assist in recruitment of new businesses and support for existing businesses. Maintaining and utilizing the inventory will help stabilize the Downtown Lovington business district.

RECRUIT NEW BUSINESSES

Given the number of vacant buildings and properties within the Downtown MRA District, recruitment of new businesses should be a high priority and joint effort between the City Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, and the Lovington EDC. There is a need to expand and diversify the business mix in Downtown Lovington. More retail shops, restaurants, coffee shops, hotels, etc. are needed to bring more interest to the area. A promotional campaign that highlights the Lovington community, and in particular, Downtown Lovington's strengths, assets, and available properties should be developed by the key stakeholders.

PROMOTE MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

The City of Lovington and Lovington MainStreet should promote the development of new multi-family housing. While there is a fair amount of single family residential within the Downtown MRA District, there is a lack of multi-family residential, which limits potential residents who are not interested in or cannot afford

a single family home. The Redevelopment Scenario identifies residential as a preferred land use along parts of Love Street, East Street, and Eddy Street. One of the priority redevelopment projects includes a multi-family development between Love Street and East Street, south of Polk Avenue. There are other vacant or underutilized properties that would also be appropriate for multi-family residential, which would bring more people and activity into Downtown once businesses have closed in the evening.

4.6 CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

Character defining elements are those patterns and details that define the character of the Downtown district. The intent is not to dictate a specific architectural style, but to help define, reinforce, and expand upon the existing visual cues. Infill development projects should not be designed to imitate past architectural styles; they should be easily recognized for being constructed within their own era.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

There is no strong architectural style common to Downtown Lovington. A variety of styles are evident, but some of the more compelling structures are the five historic structures within the Downtown MRA District. These historic buildings are indicative of Lovington's historical past and its unique place among the cities and towns of New Mexico. The architectural styles of the five historic structures are described below:

- Lea County Courthouse: Art Deco Style with large modeled massing of the structure and embellished reliefs integral to the style of the building. The building contains two 3-story wings, building up towards a 5-story, central building mass.
- Lea Theater: Modernistic design elements such as a strong vertical sign and decorative stars on the parapet.
- Old Commercial Hotel (Lea County Museum): Strong element of the New Deal aesthetic with its lack of ornamental detail and massive square shape.

- Lovington Fire Department Building: Constructed as a Works Progress Administration building with a minimal use of detail associated with the International Style.
- Sewalt House: Craftsman style with a steep shed roof, decorative false beams on the large gabled porch, and delicate multi-light windows at the end of the house.

HEIGHT, RHYTHM, and SCALE

Most of the buildings within the Downtown MRA District are 1-story structures. Many of the governmental buildings, such as the Lea County Courthouse on the south side of Main Street at Central Avenue, the Lister Building and Lea Theater to the south along Central Avenue, and the Lea Museum along Love Street, are the largest structures in Downtown. The vacant, old bank building at the northwest corner of Main Street and Central Avenue is also one of the larger, taller buildings in the MRA District.



3-story vacant building (old Lea County State Bank) at the northwest corner of Main Street and Central Avenue.

The early twentieth century and mid-century buildings on Main Street and adjacent streets are mostly 1-story structures, with a few 2- and 3-story buildings. Within the Downtown core area, most buildings are situated at the back of the adjacent public sidewalk and share common walls. These features are characteristic of a turn of the century, American downtown commercial district that is geared towards pedestrians.



1-story buildings along Main Street.

Many of the properties outside of the core area at Main Street and Central Avenue have large front setbacks with parking lots located between the sidewalk and the building. There are several large vacant lots between stand-alone buildings and/or strip commercial development.

New development proposed on these vacant lots should be placed at the street edge with parking at the sides or rear of the building. The entrance to Drylands Brewing faces Main Street with a landscape buffer between the building and sidewalk. Parking is located to the side of the building, providing accessible parking without losing the connection to the street.



Drylands Brewing with landscape between the building and the sidewalk.

Infill buildings in this part of the MRA could be two or three-story and still blend into the surrounding development. However, care should be taken to design the building within the context of the surrounding structures so as not to create an abrupt change in the rhythm of the street.

MATERIALS and COLORS

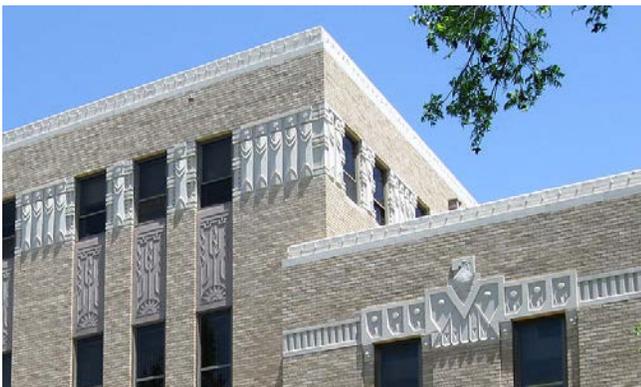
Colors around the courthouse square are primarily beige, white, red brick, and brown. Recently some Downtown merchants have painted their storefronts brighter colors. The Lea Theater, incorporates a dark green on the marquee and blue stars on the upper facade and in the entryway. On adjacent streets, retail businesses are decorated with folk art and faux weathered paint and muted colors.



Beige and brown brick with red brick accents.

Brick is a common finish material on the commercial buildings along Main Avenue. The brick is set in a variety of patterns, including diamond, herringbone, running bond, and basketweave.

Stucco and concrete, more common among the larger buildings in the commercial district, are generally white or beige. The Lea County Courthouse mixes both concrete and light blond brick on the exterior with Southwest Indian and Art Deco bas reliefs of stylized thunderbirds, sun, corn, and rain symbols.



Bas relief on the Lea County Courthouse.

Several of the larger buildings such as the Lister Building, Lea County Museum, and the vacant, old Lea County State Bank have non-ornamental white stucco exteriors.

WINDOWS and DOORS

Along the Main Street commercial buildings most buildings have large storefront windows and doors that are set to the sidewalk facing the right of way. Some storefronts are recessed providing deep entry ways that merchants use for window decor.

Distinctive window and entry door designs in the area include the Lea County Museum building, which has arched windows and door frames that are currently painted red on the white stucco exterior walls; Lovington Public Library, which are relatively small windows on a curved wall facing Main Street with little ornamentation; and the Lea County Courthouse windows, which are metal and arranged in vertical bands, with metal spandrels that are embellished with abstract Indian motif designs.



Lovington Library windows.

STREET FURNITURE and LIGHTING

There is very little street furniture in the Downtown area. Trash receptacles are very sparse along Downtown streets, and the receptacles that are in place do not add an aesthetic quality. Wood benches are located at the Courthouse Square, but there is no seating anywhere else other than what has been provided by local merchants. The City should use the opportunity of the NMDOT project for Main Street to choose a common theme and color palette for benches, trash receptacles, and light fixtures and

locate these along Main Street, Central Avenue, and throughout the commercial areas of the Downtown MRA District. Rather than using wood as a material, any new street furniture should be constructed from more durable materials such as rolled steel. The benches and trash receptacles could be designed to incorporate the City's name and logo to add to Downtown branding.

Light fixtures around the Lea County Courthouse area are at pedestrian level; some include banner holders. Increasing the number of light fixtures will add a sense of security and encourage visitors to remain Downtown during the evening. Any new light fixtures should include electrical outlets for outdoor decorations during the holidays and equipment during community events.



Light fixture along Main Street.

STREETSCAPE

Sidewalk widths around the Courthouse Square are more generous than typical sidewalks. The City can take advantage of these wider sidewalks and incorporate additional planters, street furniture, and street trees. The intersections of Main Street and Washington and Central Avenues incorporate landscaped bulb-outs on the corners. Red bricks and similarly colored cement pave the sidewalks around the Courthouse and along Central and Washington Avenues. The streetscape along Main Street is sparse. Adding streetscape elements, such as street trees, benches, light fixtures, etc., will improve the aesthetics of the corridor, encourage slower traffic, and add to pedestrian comfort and safety.

SIGNAGE and WAYFINDING

Signage is an important element in defining the character of the Downtown district. In Lovington, signs are primarily wall- or pole-mounted, and very few are monument style. Several business signs are painted on windows or doors. A strong recommendation from workshops and interviews was to encourage new and more effective signage for businesses that clearly indicate the business' name and hours.

The Drylands Brewing pole sign provides a strong identifying character to Downtown and is clearly visible along Main Street with its bold colors on a dark background. Other signs with strong character include On the Street and Lazy Six Restaurant.



Gateway signs are an effective method of informing visitors they are entering a special area of the City. Wayfinding signs that lead visitors to the various points of interest in the Downtown area are important to keep visitors Downtown as long as possible and make the experience comfortable and welcoming (see *Wayfinding recommendations in the Redevelopment Scenario and Section 4.4: Public Sector Investments*).



LANDSCAPE

The Courthouse grounds are landscaped with turf, several varieties of trees (including pecan trees), and flowers. On adjacent streets, there are street trees and small shrubs on some properties. The Lea County State Bank building on Main Street and Avenue C has incorporated turf, desert willow trees, and small evergreen shrubs in the area facing Main Street. Several participants at the public meetings cited this landscaping as desirable for the Downtown area for its clean and well-kept appearance.



Healthy evergreen and deciduous trees at Main Street and Avenue B.

The City of Lovington should develop a plant list that is appropriate for Downtown relative to watering requirements, sun exposure, and growing conditions. This plant list could be developed as part of amending the Zoning Ordinance, which is recommended by the Downtown MRA Plan as a support action.

PUBLIC GATHERING SPACES

There are very few public gathering spaces in the Downtown area. Outdoor events are typically held on closed City streets, and some merchants have complained about this practice. Green space around the Lea County Courthouse has in the past been used for community events, but this has been discontinued. Fran Atchley Plaza is a small, public gathering space that is in significant need of improvement, but is not large enough for community events (see *Section 4.4 Public Sector Investments for a description of the improvements identified for Fran Atchley Plaza*). The Veterans Memorial located on the Courthouse grounds attracts some visitors, but is obviously not intended for event space.



Fran Atchley Plaza.

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CHAPTER 5
IMPLEMENTATION & FUNDING

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION

The Downtown MRA Plan identifies a wide range of priority redevelopment projects, public sector investment priorities, and support actions for the City of Lovington and Lovington MainStreet. These projects and actions have been identified through the public engagement process and are intended to help stimulate or leverage private sector investment, encourage public/private partnerships, and fulfill the vision for Downtown Lovington. The projects and actions are listed in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 and are supplemented by responsible agencies and potential partnerships,

potential funding sources, priority, and general time frame. The funding sources listed in the tables may not cover all of the potential ways to fund these projects. Section 5.2 (page 75) includes an overview of project financing mechanisms and Section 5.3 (page 78) provides a comprehensive list of funding sources organized by type and are numbered 1 through 42. As noted in the Tables, some of the larger projects may require more than one funding source and may require phasing. Fortunately for the City of Lovington, the NMDOT has already funded the street improvements for Main Street, so this project is not included under the Public Sector Investment projects.

TABLE 5.1: DOWNTOWN LOVINGTON MRA DISTRICT - PRIORITY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Physical	Administrative/ Design	Regulatory	Project	Responsible Agencies and Potential Partnerships	Funding Sources	Priority	Time Frame
√	√		New Multi-family Site on Love Street	Private Property Owner/ Developer, City of Lovington	Private Developer, NM Mortgage Finance Authority, LIHTC	Low	Medium Term
√	√		New Hotel / Commercial Site on Main Street	Private Property Owner/ Developer, City of Lovington	Legislative Appropriations, Private Investment, LEDA	Medium	Medium Term
√	√		New Commercial Site on Main Street	Private Property Owner/ Developer, City of Lovington	Legislative Appropriations, Private Investment	Medium	Long Term
√	√		Redevelop Main Street Cafe Building	Private Property Owner/ Developer, City of Lovington	Legislative Appropriations, Private Investment	High	Medium Term

TABLE 5.2: DOWNTOWN LOVINGTON MRA DISTRICT - PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENTS

Physical	Administrative/ Design	Regulatory	Project	Responsible Agencies and Partnerships	Funding Sources	Priority	Time Frame
√	√		Improve Lea Theater	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, Lovington EDC	Capital Outlay, NM MainStreet, NEA, Private Foundations	High	Short Term
√	√		Revitalize Fran Atchley Plaza*	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, NM MainStreet	ICIP, City General Fund	High	Short Term
√	√		Create a Library Parklet	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, NM Resiliency Alliance, Lovington Public Library	City General Fund, NM Resiliency Alliance, Lovington MainStreet	Medium	Short Term
√	√		Create a New Event Space @ Main Street and Avenue A	City of Lovington	ICIP, General Fund	Medium	Medium Term
√	√		Create a Downtown Wayfinding Program	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet	ICIP, Legislative Appropriations, Lodgers' Tax	High	Short Term
√			Improve Sidewalk / Street Conditions & Lighting*	City of Lovington, NMDOT	ICIP, Legislative Appropriations City General Fund	High	Medium Term

* Projects that will likely be completed in multiple phases.

TABLE 5.3: DOWNTOWN LOVINGTON MRA DISTRICT SUPPORT ACTIONS

Physical	Administrative/ Design	Regulatory	Project	Agencies and Partnerships	Funding Sources	Priority	Time Frame
		√	Amend Zoning Ordinance	City of Lovington	City General Fund	High	Short Term
√			Improve Building Facades	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, Private Property Owners, NMMS	Private Property Owners, NMMS	Medium	On-going
	√		Ongoing Communications with Downtown Businesses	Lovington MainStreet	-	Low	On-going
	√		Develop a Building and Business Directory	Lovington MainStreet, Lovington EDC, Chamber of Commerce	-	High	On-going
	√		Recruit New Businesses	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, Lovington EDC	USDA RBDG, BID	High	On-going
	√		Promote Multi-family Housing Development	City of Lovington, Lovington MainStreet, Lovington EDC	Hope VI	Low	Medium Term

5.2 PROJECT FINANCING

Several of the projects identified in the Lovington Downtown MRA Plan will rely on municipal financing tools available for redevelopment. These include revenue enhancements, planning overlays and tax incentives, self-assessment tax strategies, municipal bonds and capital outlays, and public/private partnerships. An overview of these financing tools are as follows:

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Utilizing public/private partnerships is an excellent approach used by municipalities to support redevelopment. The Downtown MRA Plan provides the tool needed for New Mexico communities to participate in public/private partnerships without violating the New Mexico Anti-Donation Clause (Article IX, Section 14). There are numerous ways the City of Lovington can engage in public-private partnerships, including land or building donation, land acquisition

and disposition through a RFP (Request for Proposal) process to attract a private developer, waiver of utility hook-up fees, assistance in securing loans or grants, infrastructure improvements, or subsidizing leases for any City-owned buildings.

A private sector investor group or individuals can play a significant role in strategically targeting building and property acquisitions, building rehabilitation and redevelopment, and new business start-ups. The City of Lovington should make an effort to advertise redevelopment opportunities, to pursue public/private partnerships, and to support business retention efforts. The City should research economic development assistance through New Mexico MainStreet and should continue to utilize as many of the state's available economic tools as is feasible.

The City of Lovington has a LEDA ordinance in place, which identifies goals for creating jobs, improving and diversifying the local economy, key target industries, and the City's role in job creation. The LEDA ordinance

allows the City to provide resources to support those qualifying businesses including land, buildings, infrastructure, money, and/or industrial revenue bonds.

REVENUE ENHANCEMENTS

Municipal Gross Receipts Tax Revenues: Local Option Gross Receipts Tax (LOGRT) is a financing tool that should be considered to fund infrastructure improvements. Municipalities in New Mexico may impose by ordinance an excise tax not to exceed a rate of 1.5% in a single ordinance or in aggregate. Increments for both infrastructure improvements and for “quality of life” projects could be imposed as a potential funding source. The advantage of GRT collection is that it includes revenue from tourists and shoppers from outside the municipal limits, allowing for broader collection of revenues than some special purpose funding sources.

Quality of Life Gross Receipts Tax: The legislation requires that the revenue must be dedicated to cultural programs and activities provided by the municipality and to cultural programs, events, and activities provided by contract or operating agreement with a non-profit or publicly-owned cultural organization.

Ad Valorem Taxes: Property taxes provide a smaller, but still important, revenue stream for municipalities. As previously noted, the City has seen an increase in property values since 2012, which translates to an increase in ad valorem tax revenues for the City even though there have not been any new tax rate increases during that time.

PLANNING TOOLS and TAX INCENTIVES

In addition to Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas and associated plans, other types of planning tools and tax incentives include:

Tax Increment Finance District (TIF): A Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) can be used as a redevelopment tool of blighted “brownfield” (previously developed and potentially contaminated) sites. The municipality can target a blighted area for redevelopment projects that will raise the assessed property values within the TIF district. The new “increment” rise in property taxes is then captured

by the municipality and designated for reinvestment in public projects and infrastructure within the district. The traditional TIF district has been used to create numerous TIF districts in New Mexico including the City of Lovington. Other cities that have used TIF districts are Las Vegas, Silver City, Las Cruces, and Albuquerque.

Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDD):

A TIDD is another financing tool available for development in New Mexico. It has two major differences that set it apart from the more traditional TIF. First, it can capture two types of tax increment - the GRT increment and the property tax increment. Second, the TIDD can be used both on brownfield and “greenfield” (undeveloped) sites. The GRT portion can either be done as local only or include state GRT as well. State GRT requires approval of the State Board of Finance and the Legislature. Local approval requires a petition to be signed by 51% of the property owners within the proposed TIDD.

A TIDD is a major financial tool for public infrastructure programs that a municipality or a property owner may not be able to generate on their own. Bonds are generated to pay the upfront costs of the TIDD infrastructure and the tax increment revenues pay back the bonds. The captured revenues from the increment must be spent on the public infrastructure within the district. The local governing body, the New Mexico Board of Finance, and the State Legislature must all approve a TIDD. Due to the potential financial magnitude of a TIDD, the development and approval process is substantial and bond finance experts, economists, and attorneys are all typically involved in the application.

A TIDD may be a viable tool to consider using for Downtown improvements. However, due to its complexity and the cost of application, careful analysis would be required prior to initiation. The City may want to consult with the New Mexico State Board of Finance for guidance on a successful application.

State Income Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties: The State Income Tax Credit for Registered Cultural Properties program was established in 1984

to encourage the restoration, rehabilitation and preservation of cultural properties. It is administered by the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division. More than 800 projects have been approved for New Mexico homes, hotels, restaurants, businesses and theaters that benefited from one of the few financial incentives available to owners of historic properties. To be eligible, buildings must be individually listed in or be listed as contributing to a State Register of Cultural Properties historic district. The maximum amount of project expenses eligible for the tax credit is \$50,000. If listed in an Arts and Cultural District, the maximum is \$100,000. The maximum credit is 50% of eligible costs of the approved rehabilitation or 5 years of tax liability, whichever is least. The credit is applied against New Mexico income taxes owed in the year the project is completed, and the balance may be carried forward for up to four additional years.

Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives

Program: The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program, administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Offices, is the nation's most effective and largest program specifically supporting historic preservation. With over 39,600 completed projects since its inception in 1976, the program has generated over \$69 billion in the rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties. As cited in the National Park Service's 2015 Annual Report, there were 1,283 proposed projects and \$6.63 billion in rehabilitation approved; 870 completed projects and \$4.47 billion in rehabilitation work certified.

Federal Tax Incentives for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings:

Over the program's 35-year history, it has invested over \$66 billion toward rehabilitation that has covered 38,819 certified projects. The National Park Service determines whether a historic building qualifies as a certified historic structure and whether the rehabilitation work will preserve the historic character of the building.

New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC): New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) is a major federal incentive to spur new or increased private investments into operating

businesses and projects located within low income communities. The NMTC program was established by Congress in 2000 as part of the Community Renewal and Tax Relief Act of 2000. The goal of the program is to spur revitalization efforts in low-income census tracts across the United States and Territories, as indicated by the American Community Survey. It is helpful for projects to be within a MRA District. In 2004, the program was amended to create three new categories of low income communities, including High Out-Migration Rural County Census Tracts; Low-Population / Empowerment Zone Census Tracts; and Targeted Populations.

The NMTC program allows individual and corporate investors to receive tax credits for equity investments by certified Community Development Entities. The tax credit equals 39% of the original investment and is paid out over a period of seven years (5% for each of the first three years, and 6% for each of the remaining four years). One limitation for many MainStreet communities in New Mexico is the required project threshold of \$5 million to be eligible for these tax credits.

SELF-ASSESSMENT TAX STRATEGIES

There are two popular programs available for property and business owners who wish to tax themselves incrementally in order to pay for improvements and services that enhance their properties. These self-assessment strategies are the Public Improvement District (PID) and the Business Improvement District (BID).

Public Improvement District: A Public Improvement District (PID) is established by the governing body through a petition of the majority of property owners within the district to impose an additional annual property tax assessment on their properties. The assessment is based upon an agreed upon formula used for the purpose of financing upfront costs of public infrastructure improvements such as water and sewer lines, street and sidewalk improvements, mass transit or trail improvements, parking lots, park and recreation facilities, libraries and cultural facilities, landscaping, public art, and public safety facilities. The projects are typically financed through bonds with a minimum of

10-year (and more commonly 20 or 25 year) payback periods. The municipality is allowed to contribute funds, equipment, or in-kind services in assistance to the PID.

Business Improvement District: A Business Improvement District (BID) is similar to a PID in that it is established by the governing body, funded by a new increment of property tax assessment, and created through a petition of the majority of property owners in the district. A BID is established to provide additional funding for improvements in a business district. Revenues are collected annually through a special assessment by the City and returned to an approved BID management agency to support business recruitment, retention, and support. Typical BID services include enhanced safety and cleanliness programs, cooperative marketing and signage, hospitality services, transportation services (trolleys, bike racks, safe rides home, etc.), improved lighting or landscaping, and other important district improvements and services. Within MainStreet communities, the BID property community is established under the MainStreet Board, which allows the property committee to benefit from the programs and priorities established by the Board. Two examples of New Mexico communities that utilize BIDs for their downtowns are the City of Albuquerque and the City of Gallup.

MUNICIPAL AND CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDS

Municipal bonds can support future redevelopment projects in Downtown Lovington. Requests for capital outlay appropriations may also help to fill the gap for a major redevelopment project. The state legislature has received positive reports on the impact taxpayer investment has had on MainStreet communities. As reported in Albuquerque Business First, Jon Barela, (former) New Mexico Economic Development Cabinet Secretary, stated:

"...New Mexico taxpayers are seeing a return on their investments and business and local governments benefit greatly from that investment". The article goes on to state that in a report prepared by Place Economics and commissioned by the New Mexico Economic

Development Department, "since the program began in 1986, for every \$1 the state invested in the NM MainStreet Program, the MainStreet communities saw private investment of \$21.89 in building rehabilitation and \$22.55 in new construction. Since 1986 through July of 2013, New Mexico MainStreet communities saw a gain of 3,200 net new businesses and nearly 11,300 net new jobs."

PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS

Private foundations can play a vital role in providing funding. There are many organizations and foundations that provide grants to municipalities and tax-exempt non-profit groups for redevelopment projects and improvements. The City of Lovington and the Lovington Economic Development Corporation should research the criteria and apply for grants that will help achieve the goals of the Downtown MRA Plan. Some examples include the McCune Charitable Foundation, Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, Lannan Foundation, New Mexico Community Foundation, etc.

5.3 FUNDING SOURCES

The funding sources section provides a list of federal and state sources available to both local governments and individuals interested in starting a new business, in need of a small business loan, or engaging in historic preservation within the Downtown Lovington MRA. Each program has eligibility criteria and contact information. The implementation projects and strategies identified in the previous section reference the following funding sources:

CITY BUDGET AND TAXATION AUTHORITY

- 1. Business Improvement District (BID):** Downtown business owners may elect to establish a BID to pay for maintenance, safety, hospitality training, or promotion.
- 2. General Obligation Bonds:** General obligation bonds may be issued by the City of Lovington to finance capital improvement projects. The City pays the principal and the interest on the bonds and the bonds are redeemed with property tax revenue.

3. Infrastructure Capital Improvements Plan (ICIP):

Infrastructure projects are funded through capital outlay and the ICIP. City funds can be leveraged as matching funds to secure larger grants or loans by state or federal agencies.

4. Local Options Gross Receipts Tax (LOGRT):

The City of Lovington may opt for a vote by residents to raise the local gross receipts rate to help fund and provide additional revenue for economic development projects within the Downtown MRA.

5. Lodgers' Tax: Lodgers' tax revenues can be used for promotion and advertising of Downtown attractions and special events. It may also be used to acquire, develop, and operate tourist-related facilities.

6. Public/Private Partnerships: The City of Lovington can establish public private partnerships with developers who are seeking additional financial support or incentives to develop community facilities, affordable housing, retail, or office space within the Downtown MRA District. The City may enter an agreement with an interested party that wants to develop or operate a City-owned property.

7. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District: The City of Lovington has the option of establishing a TIF for Downtown Lovington. This would allow future gains in gross receipts taxes or property taxes to pay for streetscape, infrastructure, or building improvements or rehabilitation.

CAPITAL OUTLAY

8. Cooperative Agreements Program (COOP) Local

Government Road Fund: This program assists local governments and other public entities to improve, construct, maintain, repair, and pave highways, streets, and public parking lots. Funds must be used for the construction, maintenance, repair, and the improvements of public highways, streets, and parking lots. The local match is 40% and awards range from \$9,000 to \$192,000. Funds are made available at the beginning of the fiscal year and must be encumbered and spent no later than the end of the fiscal year.

Contact: NMDOT, Maintenance Section
1120 Cerrillos Road
PO. Box 1149

Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149
Phone: (505) 827-5498
Website: www.nmshtd.state.nm.us/

9. Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) Capital Outlay Funds:

Administered by the New Mexico Economic Development Department, LEDA funds are provided to local governments to help stimulate economic development efforts. Grant funding is based on the receipt of capital outlay funds appropriated by the New Mexico Legislature and are provided on a reimbursable basis only. Guidelines for eligible projects can be found on the NMEDD website, but generally include requirements such as the need to create permanent, full-time, private-sector jobs; the project must be fully-funded and shovel ready, and must target industry clusters such as aerospace and defense, advanced manufacturing, back office and technical support, digital and emerging media, energy, food processing, and logistics, distribution and transportation.

Contact: New Mexico Economic Development Dept.
Joseph M. Montoya Building
1100 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Phone: (505) 827-0264
Website: gonm.biz/business-resource-center/edd-programs-for-business/finance-development/leda/

10. Municipal Arterial Program (MAP) Local

Government Road Fund: This program assists municipalities construct and reconstruct streets which are principal extensions of the rural highway system and other streets which qualify under NMDOT criteria. Municipalities are required to contribute 25% to the cost of the project. There is no set limit to the amount of awards, but the state's share typically ranges from \$50,000 to \$1.1 million per project. Complete applications must be received by March 15th for funding to be considered by the fiscal year beginning July 1.

Contact: Engineer Maintenance Section
New Mexico Department of Transportation
1120 Cerrillos Road
PO Box 1149
Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149
Phone: (505) 827-5498
Website: www.nmshtd.state.nm.us

11. New Mexico MainStreet Capital Outlay Fund:

NMMS receives funding from the State Legislature each year that MainStreet communities are eligible to apply for to implement identified priority catalytic projects within a MainStreet district. Program funds are competitive.

Contact: New Mexico MainStreet Program
Joseph M. Montoya Building
1100 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM, 87505
Phone: (505) 827-0168
Website: nmmainstreet.org/

12. New Mexico Resiliency Alliance Resilient

Communities Fund: The Fund will support community development projects within two categories: Healthy Community Design and Public Infrastructure which supports projects that enhance physical infrastructure with elements that improve health outcomes of residents; and Resilient Community Initiatives which enhance resilience and economic prosperity for residents in underserved communities by supporting the development of entrepreneurship, placemaking activities, and cultural preservation activities.

Contact: New Mexico Resiliency Alliance
P.O. Box 9630
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Website: nmresiliencyalliance.org

13. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP):

The TAP is administered by the New Mexico Department of Transportation. TAP funds can be used for design and construction of streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, lighting, etc. The NMDOT has a competitive process for TAP funds based on how well the application addresses the goals of the program. Approximately every two years, NMDOT coordinates with the state's seven RTPOs and five MPOs on soliciting TAP applications.

Contact: New Mexico Department of Transportation
1120 Cerrillos Road
Santa Fe, NM, 87504
Phone: (505) 827-5100
Website: dot.state.nm.us/content/nmdot/en/Planning.html

14. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT):

The DOT provides funding for restoration projects through Transportation Enhancement funds, which are administered through NMDOT's Surface Transportation Program (STP). The STP program funds construction, improvement, and other transportation-related projects on roads functionally classified Interstate, Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, or Major Collector.

Contact: NMDOT General Office
1120 Cerrillos Road
Santa Fe, NM, 87504-1149
Phone: (505) 827-5100
Website: www.nmshtd.state.nm.us

COMMUNITY GRANTS

15. HOPE VI Main Avenue Program: This program provides grants to communities under 50,000 in population for development of affordable housing that is undertaken in connection with a MainStreet revitalization effort. Obsolete commercial offices or buildings can be reconfigured into rent producing affordable housing. The grants cannot be used on general infrastructure or commercial development.

Contact: US Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410
Phone: (202) 708-1112
Website: portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/ph/hope6/grants/mainstreet

16. Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):

This program is administered by the National Park Service. The state side of the LWCF provides matching grants to states and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The New Mexico State Parks Division of the Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department administers the state program. New Mexico has received \$37.4 million dollars from the LWCF program since its inception 40 years ago and funded hundreds of projects around the state from baseball and soccer fields to trails, playgrounds, and picnic areas. State agencies, municipalities, counties, schools, and tribes have

developed and improved over 1,000 close to home outdoor recreation areas in response to the needs of its citizens and visitors by providing a permanent legacy of parks, facilities, and open space.

Contact: National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW, Org-2225
Washington, D.C. 20240
Website: www.nps.gov/subjects/lwcf/index.htm

17. McCune Charitable Foundation: The McCune Charitable Foundation is dedicated to enriching the health, education, environment, and cultural and spiritual life of New Mexicans. The Foundation memorializes its benefactors through proactive grant making that seeks to foster positive social change. The McCune Foundation funds projects that benefit New Mexico in the areas of arts, economic development, education, environment, health, and social services. Grants for specific projects, operating expenses, and capital expenses are considered. Grants can be awarded to qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, federally recognized Indian tribes, public schools, and governmental agencies, but cannot be awarded to individuals.

Contacts: McCune Charitable Foundation
345 East Alameda Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Phone: (505) 983-8300
Website: www.nmmccune.org

18. National Endowment for the Arts (NEA): The NEA provides funding for feasibility studies related to the renovation, restoration, or adaptive reuse of facilities or spaces for cultural activities, architectural studies, projects that address cultural tourism, or the revitalization or improvement of cultural districts. Funding is not available for actual renovation or construction costs.

NEA also administers Our Town Grants, which support creative placemaking projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places with the arts at their core. Our Town offers support for projects in two areas: 1) arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects. Matching grants range from \$25,000 to \$200,000; and 2) projects that build knowledge about creative placemaking. These are

projects available to arts and design service organizations and other organizations that provide technical assistance to those doing place-based work. Matching grants range from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

Contact: National Endowment for the Arts
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20506-0001
Phone: 202-682-5400
Website: www.nea.gov/
www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction

19. National Trust for Historic Preservation: The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit organization that provides leadership, education, advocacy, and resources to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize our communities. The National Trust Preservation Fund offers several types of financial assistance to nonprofit organizations, public agencies, for-profit companies, and individuals involved in preservation-related projects. In 2005, the National Trust Preservation Fund provided almost \$17 million in financial assistance and direct investment in cities, towns, and rural areas all over the United States.

Contact: National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20036-2117
Phone: (202) 588-6000 or (800) 944-6847
Email: info@nthp.org
Website: www.preservationnation.org/

20. Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program: This program is administered by the State of New Mexico through the Department of Finance and Administration Local Government Division for communities with populations under 50,000. Funds can be applied towards planning projects, economic development activities, emergency activities, construction or improvement of public buildings, and rehabilitation or repair of housing units. CDBG funds can be used for towns engaged in Downtown revitalization, including redevelopment of streets and facade improvement programs. There is a \$500,000 grant limit (or \$750,000 if the application includes a Certified Cost Estimate) per applicant

(\$50,000 maximum for planning efforts) and a 5% cash match by the applicant is required.

Contact: State of New Mexico, Local Government
Division
131 S. Capitol
Bataan Memorial Bldg., Suite 201
Santa Fe, NM 87503
Phone: (505) 827-8053
Website: nmdfa.state.nm.us/CDBG_Information_1.aspx

21. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Brownfields Program: The EPA Brownfields Program provides grants for rehabilitating affected historic properties. The Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters.

Contact: US EPA Office of Brownfields and Land
Revitalization
Mail Code 5105 T
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 566-2777
Website: www.epa.gov/brownfields/index.htm

22. ArtPlace America, National Creative Placemaking

Fund: ArtPlace America focuses on creative placemaking and works with foundations, federal agencies, and financial institutions in order to position arts and culture as a core sector of comprehensive community planning and development. The National Creative Placemaking Fund is a competitive national program that invests money in communities across the country in which artists, arts organizations, and arts and culture activity help drive community development. To date, the Fund has invested \$77 million in 256 projects across 187 communities, including 45 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.

Contact: ArtPlace America
195 Montague Street, 14th Floor
Brooklyn, New York 11201
Phone: (347) 853-7817
Website: www.artplaceamerica.org

COMMUNITY/BUSINESS LOANS & ASSISTANCE

23. ACCION New Mexico: Accion is a non-profit organization that increases access to business credit, makes loans and provides training which enable emerging entrepreneurs to realize their dreams and be catalysts for positive economic and social change in the community. Accion offers loans from \$200 to \$500,000 and above, as well as networking and training opportunities.

Contact: ACCION New Mexico
2000 Zearing Road NW
Albuquerque, NM 87104
Phone: (505) 243-8844
Website: www.accionnm.org

24. Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP): The JTIP is one of the most valuable incentives offered to new employers in New Mexico, and can be used effectively in recruitment packages. This program reimburses 50 to 70% of employee wages and required travel expenses during an extended training period for new hires for new and expanding companies in New Mexico. The JTIP must be applied for and approved prior to reimbursable wages being paid.

Contact: New Mexico Economic Development Dept.
Joseph M. Montoya Building
1100 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Phone: (505) 827-0323
Website: www.goNM.biz

25. New Market Tax Credits: New Market Tax Credits loan funds are intended to help business investment in low-income census tracts. The fund provides financing for development of commercial, industrial, and retail real estate projects (including community facilities) and some housing projects. Loans for up to 25% of the project are available at low interest rates. NMTC loans are combined with other sources of funding that is secured by the applicant and managed by Finance New Mexico.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority
207 Shelby Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Phone: (505) 984-1454
Website: www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/index.php

26. New Mexico Historic Preservation Loan Fund:

Below market rate loans are made by New Mexico Historic Preservation Division, in cooperation with commercial banks and preservation organizations, for restoration and rehabilitation of properties listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties and/or the National Register of Historic Places. Low-interest loans can be made for a maximum of \$200,000 for a term of five years or less. Borrowers must agree to: repay the loan and maintain the property as restored, rehabilitated, or repaired for at least seven years; maintain complete and proper financial records regarding the property and make them available to the Division on request; complete the project within two years from the date of the closing of the loan; and provide to the state sufficient collateral security interest in the property.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority
Department of Cultural Affairs
Bataan Memorial Building
407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Phone: (505) 827-6320
E-mail: nmtc@nmfa.net
Website: www.nmfa.net/financing/new-markets-tax-credits/

27. New Mexico Manufacturing Extension

Partnership: The New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) provides efficiency training, training in lean manufacturing, and ISO 9001 certification to the state's small and medium-sized businesses.

Contact: New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership
4501 Indian School Road NE, Suite 202
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Phone: (505) 262-0921
Website: www.newmexicomep.org

28. New Mexico Partnership: The New Mexico Partnership is a private, non-profit organization that offers assistance to businesses looking to expand or relocate to New Mexico. It can assist businesses on a variety of business initiatives, including:

- Initiate real estate searches;
- Coordinate site-selection trips;
- Personalize briefings and orientations;

- Assist in evaluating and applying for incentives;
- Facilitate the permitting process;
- Organize strategic meetings with key government and community officials;
- Collaborate on media and public relations; and
- Provide data on key business factors.

Contact: New Mexico Partnership
110 Second Street SW, Suite 602
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Phone: (505) 247-8500
Website: www.nmpartnership.com/

29. New Mexico Rural Efficient Business Program:

NM Economic Development and NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources' Energy Conversation and Management Division, and the USDA work together to help rural, small businesses, and agricultural producers reduce their energy consumption (and increase their profits). The program includes workshops and customized energy site assessments by expert engineers which are held in rural locations in each region of the state. Participants cost for the workshops and site assessments is free, although space is limited.

Contact: NM Economic Development Department
Finance Development Team
1100 S. St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505
Phone: 505-827-0264
Website: www.nmruralbiz.com

30. Public Project Revolving Fund (PPRF): The PPRF is an up to \$200,000 revolving loan fund that can be used to finance public infrastructure projects, fire and safety equipment, and public buildings. Both market rate loans and loans to disadvantaged communities at subsidized rates are made from PPRF funds. Such funds could be used for larger infrastructure projects.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority
Phone: (505) 992-9635
Toll Free: (877) ASK-NMFA
Email: frontdesk@nmfa.net
Website: www.nmfa.net/financing/public-project-revolving-fund/about-the-pprf-program/

31. SBA 7A Loan Program: The SBA 7A Loan Program is the standard SBA loan guarantee program. Up to 80% of a bank loan to a private business can be guaranteed. Banks still accomplish normal due diligence, but may be willing to accept slightly more risk. This program increases the aggregate amount of funds available to small business in the banking system. It can also serve to extend the term.

Contact: Hobbs SBDC
New Mexico Junior College
Small Business Development Center
5317 N. Lovington Highway
Hobbs, NM 88240
Phone: (575) 492-4700
Website: nmsbdc.org/hobbs.aspx

32. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan Program: The SBA 504 Loan Program is a cooperative loan program between the SBA, a bank, and a certified development corporation where the SBA loans money directly to a business in participation with a bank. This loan can only be used for fixed asset financing. The primary benefit to borrowers is that it allows for minimal equity (10%) and it can also serve to extend the term.

Contact: Enchantment Land Certified Development Company
625 Silver Avenue SW, Suite 195
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Phone: (505) 843-9232
Website: www.elcdc.com

33. SMART Money Loan Participation Program: The SMART Money Loan Participation Program is intended to leverage funds provided by local New Mexico banks for businesses that create quality jobs. The program provides bank participation loans, direct loans, and loan and bond guarantees on behalf of private for-profit and non-profit entities. The program is designed to create greater access to capital for businesses throughout New Mexico, lower the cost for the borrower, and share the risk with the bank creating a benefit to both the bank and borrower. Business loans must result in job creation and economic benefit and carry a minimum of risk.

Contact: New Mexico Finance Authority
207 Shelby Street
Santa Fe, NM 87501

(505) 992-9638
Website: www.nmfa.net/

34. The Loan Fund: The Loan Fund provides loans, training, and business consulting to small businesses that do not qualify for a bank loan, but still have a viable need for a loan and the ability to pay it back. This program started out as a micro-lending organization, but can now make loans up to \$200,000 in exceptional circumstances. Loans carry a higher than market rate to compensate for risk.

Contact: The Loan Fund
423 Iron Avenue SW / PO Box 705
Albuquerque, NM 87103
Phone: (505) 243-3196
Website: www.loanfund.org

35. USDA Rural Development Programs: The USDA provides assistance to rural communities including loan and grant programs that address small businesses and rural businesses, rural housing, rural community facilities, and rural utilities. Provides loan programs such as the B&I Loan (similar to an SBA 7A but can be made for higher amounts) and also grant programs. USDA Rural Development Grants can be made directly to small businesses that are accomplishing innovative economic development work or energy efficiency installations, but must flow through a non-profit or local government intermediary.

Contact: USDA Rural Development New Mexico Office
6200 Jefferson NE
Albuquerque, NM 87109
Phone: (505) 761-4950
TTY: (505) 761-4938
Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov/nm/

36. WESST: WESST is a non-profit, economic development organization that provides business skills training, product marketing, development opportunities, and small loans to viable start-up or growing New Mexico businesses owned by women and minorities.

Contact: WESST - Las Cruces
221 N. Main Avenue, Suite 104A
Las Cruces, NM 88001
Phone: (575) 541-1583

TAX INCENTIVES

37. Angel Investment Tax Credit: This program offers equity financing for private sector companies through tax credits that incentivize private investors. Credits are available for up to \$62,500 per taxpayer for an investment made in each of up to five New Mexico companies engaged in qualified research, technology, or manufacturing trades. Eligible companies must have most of their tangible assets and employees based in New Mexico.

Contact: New Mexico Economic Development Dept.
Joseph M. Montoya Building
1100 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505
Phone: (505) 827-0330
Website: gonm.biz/business-resource-center/edd-programs-for-business/finance-development/angelinvestment-tax-credit/

38. Beer and Wine Producers Preferential Tax Rate:

The Liquor Excise Tax Act imposes taxes on beer, wine, and spirituous liquors. Microbreweries producing less than 5,000 barrels of beer annually and small wineries producing less than 560,000 liters of wine per year qualify for a preferential tax rate. The basic tax rate for beer produced by a brewery is 41 cents; beer produced by a microbrewery (producing less than 5,000 barrels annually) is taxed at 8 cents per gallon.

Contact: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue
Roswell District Office
400 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 200
Roswell, NM 88202-1557
Phone: (575) 624-6065
Website: www.tax.newmexico.gov/

39. Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives

Program: This program is administered by the National Park Service (NPS), in partnership with the IRS and State Historic Preservation Offices. The NPS must certify all rehabilitation projects of certified historic structures seeking the 20% tax credit. In order for a rehabilitation project to become certified, the NPS must find that the rehabilitation is consistent with the historic character of the property, and where applicable, within the district in which it is located. Abandoned or under-used schools, warehouses, factories, churches, retail

stores, apartments, hotels, houses, and offices in many cities have been restored to life in a manner that retains their historic character. The program has also helped to create moderate and low-income housing in historic buildings.

Contact: National Park Service
Technical Preservation Services
1201 "Eye" Street NW, 6th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 513-7270
Email: NPS_TPS@nps.gov
Website: www.nps.gov/index.htm

40. High Wage Jobs Tax Credit: A taxpayer who is an eligible employer may apply for and receive a tax credit for each new high-wage economic-base job. The credit amount equals 10% of the wages and benefits paid for each new economic-base job created. Qualified employers can take the credit for four years. The credit may only be claimed for up to one year after the end of the four qualifying periods. The credit can be applied to the state portion of the gross receipts tax, compensating tax, and withholding tax. Any excess credit will be refunded to the taxpayer.

Contact: New Mexico Taxation and Revenue
Department
1100 South St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87504
Phone: (505) 827-0700
Website: gonm.biz/why-new-mexico/competitive-business-climate/incentives/high-wage-jobs-tax-credit

41. Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program

(LIHTC): The LIHTC program provides federal income tax credits to individuals or organizations that develop affordable housing through either new construction or acquisition and rehabilitation. The tax credits provide a dollar-for-dollar reduction in the developer's tax liability for a 10-year period. Tax credits can also be used by nonprofit or public developers to attract investment to an affordable housing project by syndicating or selling the tax credit to investors. In order to receive tax credits, a developer must set aside and rent restrict a number of units for occupancy by households below 60% of the area median income.

These units must remain affordable for a minimum of 30 years.

Contact: New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority
344 Fourth Street SW
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Phone: (505) 843-6880
Website: www.housingnm.org/developers/low-income-housing-tax-credits-lihtc

42. State Tax Credit for Registered Cultural

Properties: This program is available to owners of historic structures who accomplish qualified rehabilitation on a structure or stabilization or protection of an archaeological site. The property must be individually listed in, or contributing to a historic district listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties. The credit is applied against New Mexico income taxes owed in the year the project is completed and the balance may be carried forward for up to four additional years. Maximum in eligible expenses is \$50,000 for a tax credit of \$25,000, unless the project is within a state-approved and certified Arts and Cultural District, in which case the maximum is \$50,000. There is no minimum project expense. This program has provided accessible and useful for small projects that can include facade improvements in MainStreet districts.

Contact: Department of Cultural Affairs
New Mexico Historic Preservation Division
Bataan Memorial Building
407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236
Santa Fe, NM 87501
Phone: (505) 827-6320
E-mail: nm.shpo@state.nm.us
Website: www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/



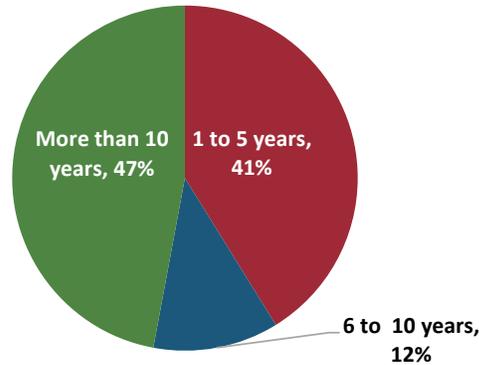
APPENDIX A
COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

A.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

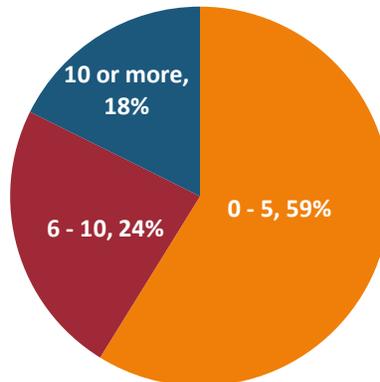
As part of the public engagement process, two surveys (one for Downtown business owners and the other for the general public) were designed by Consensus Planning as a means to gather input from the Lovington community. Both surveys were available online via [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com) and were also available in printed form. The surveys were available between December 22, 2017 and February 23, 2018. In addition to Survey Monkey, several surveys were completed during the two-day workshop held on February 21-22, 2018. In total, there were 17 business owner surveys and 127 general public surveys completed. The results of the Business Owner Survey are provided below, followed by the General Public Survey results.

BUSINESS SURVEYS

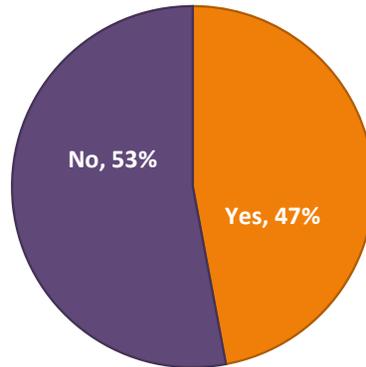
Q2. How long have you been in business at your current location?



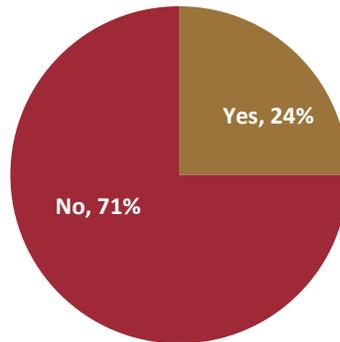
Q3. How many employees do you have?



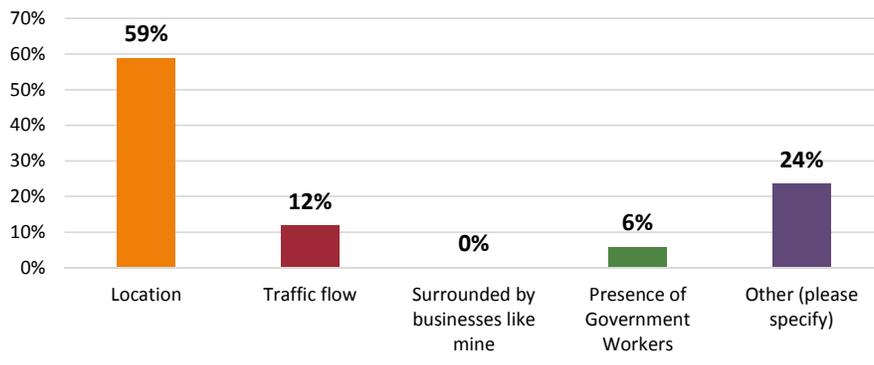
Q4. Has your business experienced high turnover?



Q5. Has your business had a hard time finding employees?

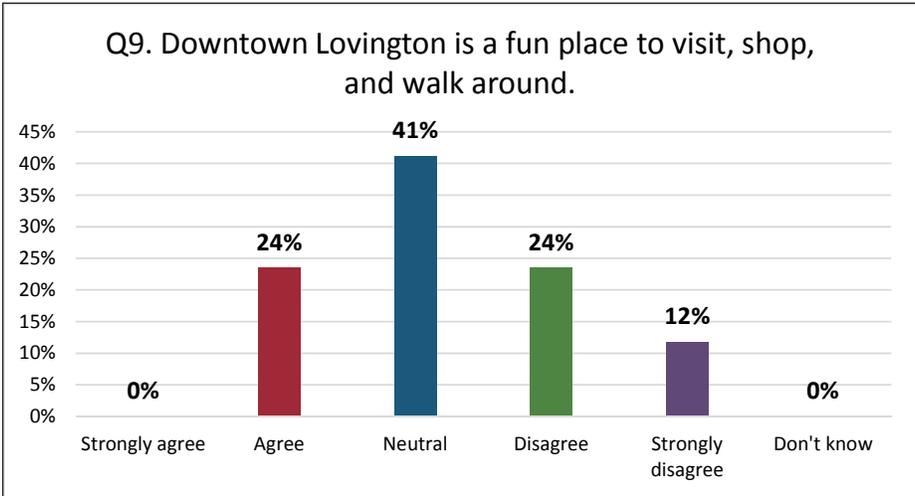
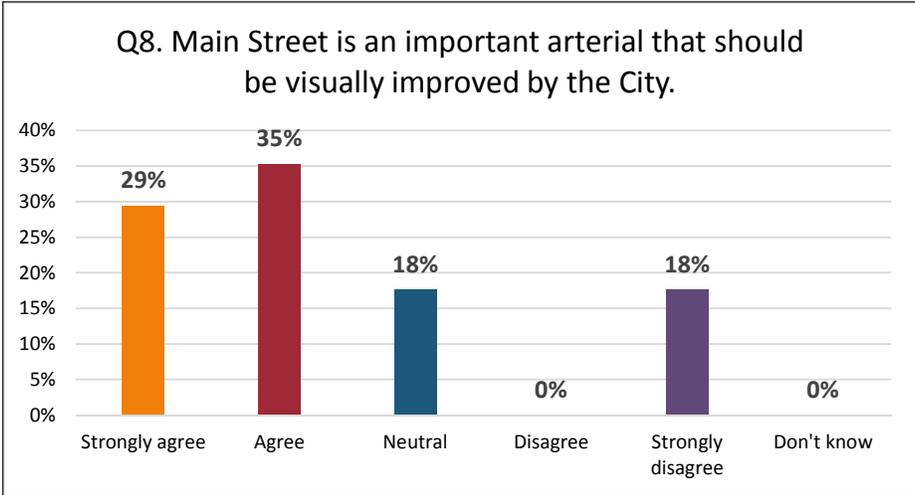
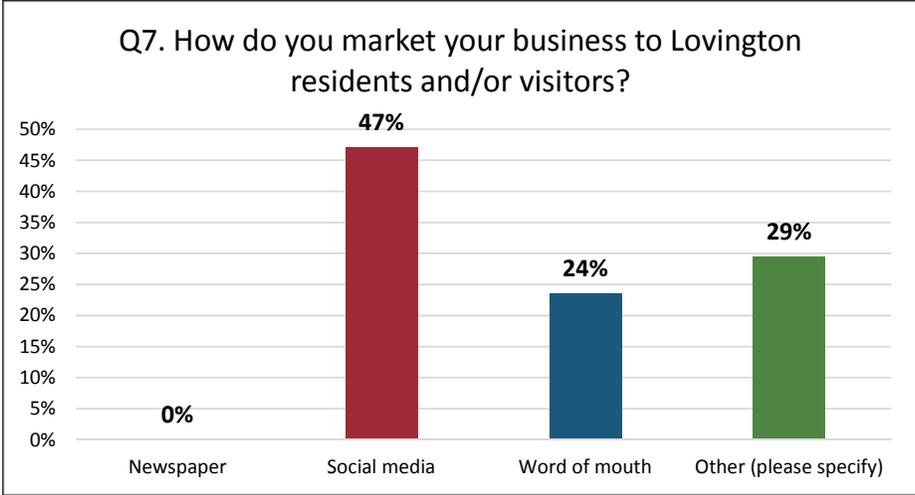


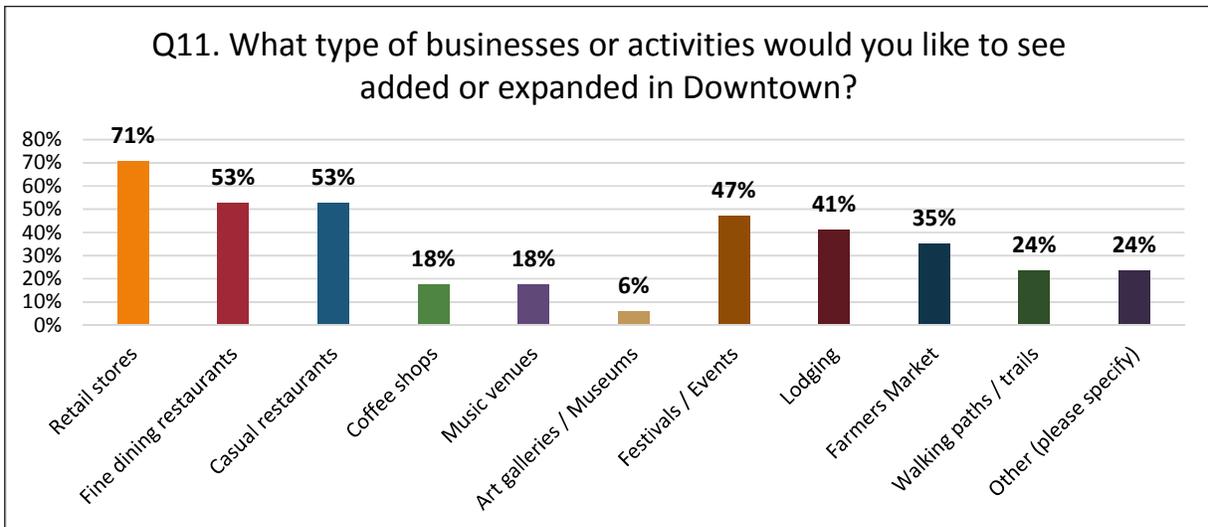
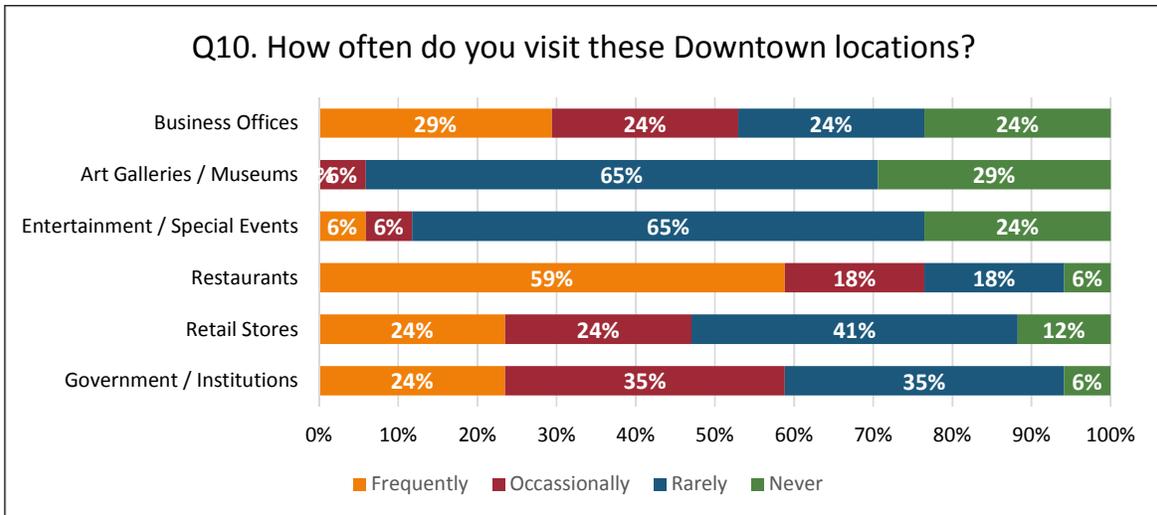
Q6. What are the benefits of having a business located Downtown?



Other:

- None for me
- Not sure
- No benefit these days
- Business is not downtown

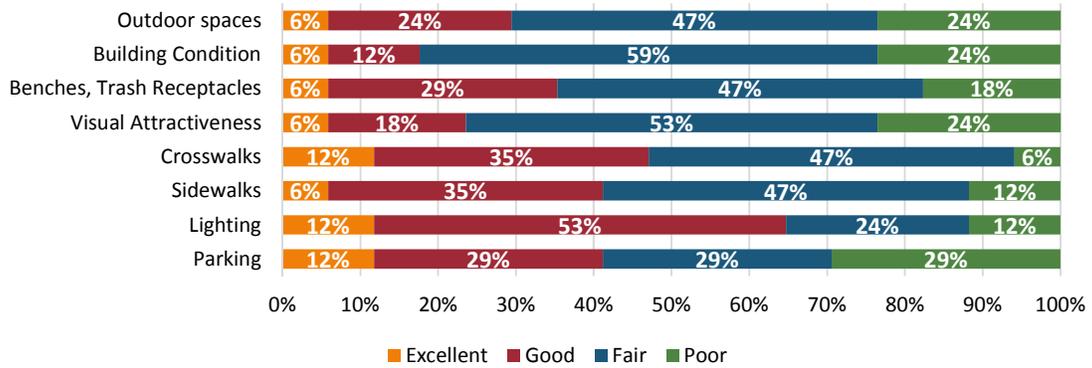




Other:

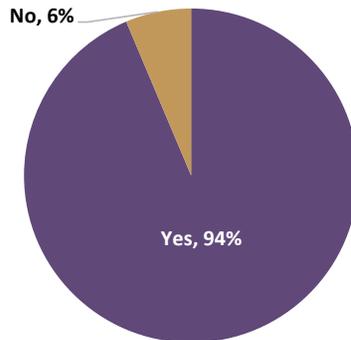
- Vendors downtown, maybe in Farmers market
- Kid friendly events
- Public spaces
- Something fun for families

Q12. How would you rate the following amenities in Downtown?

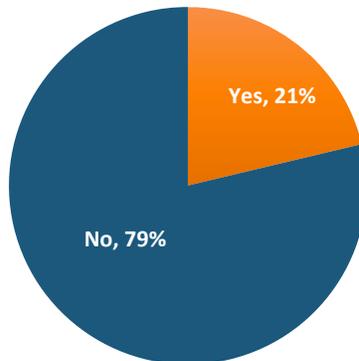


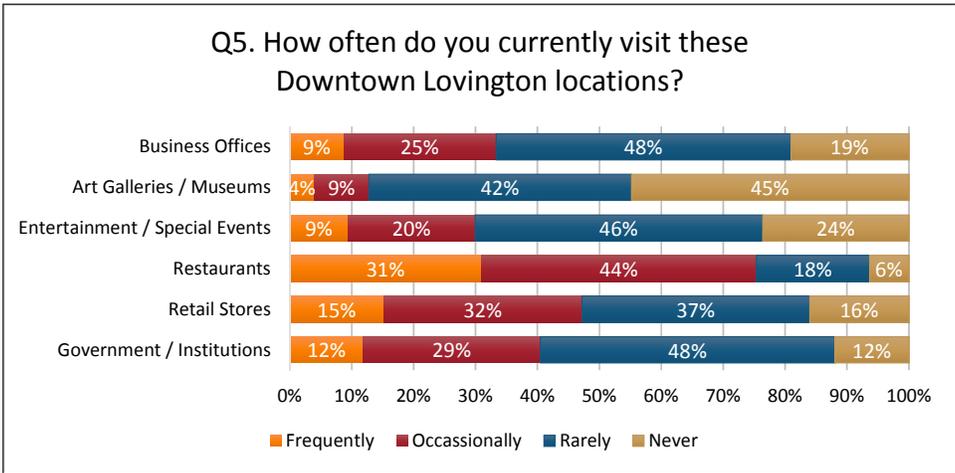
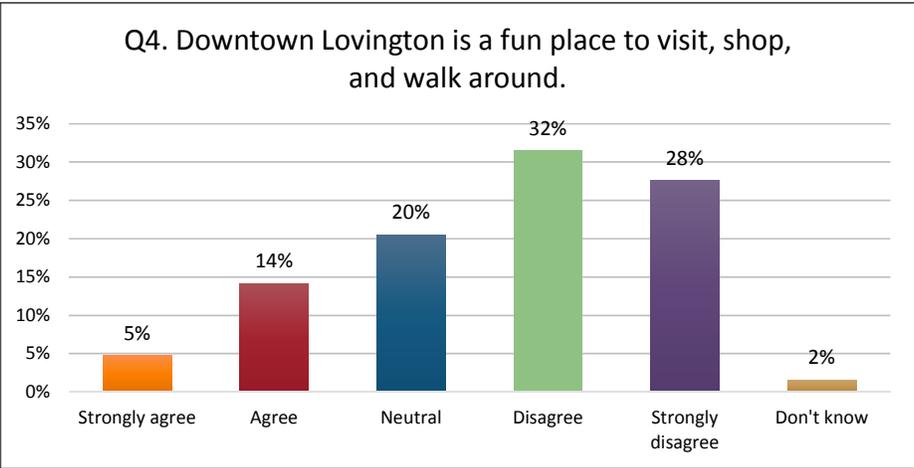
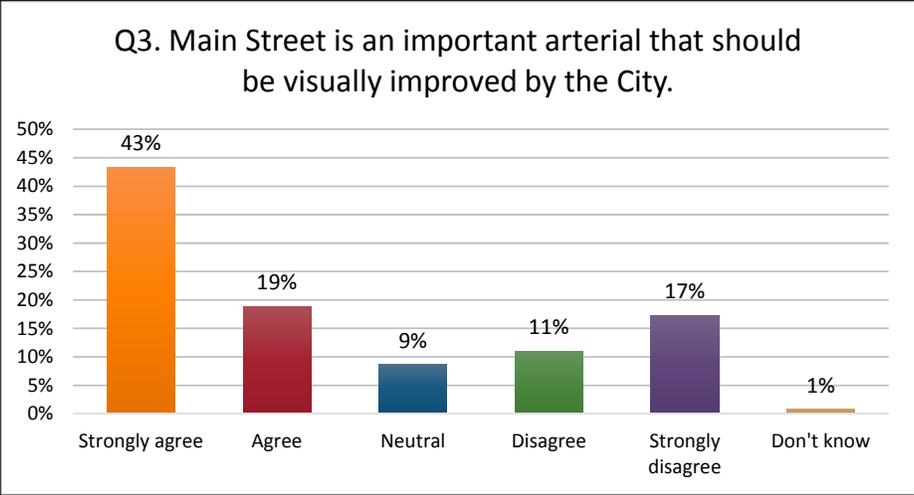
GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEYS

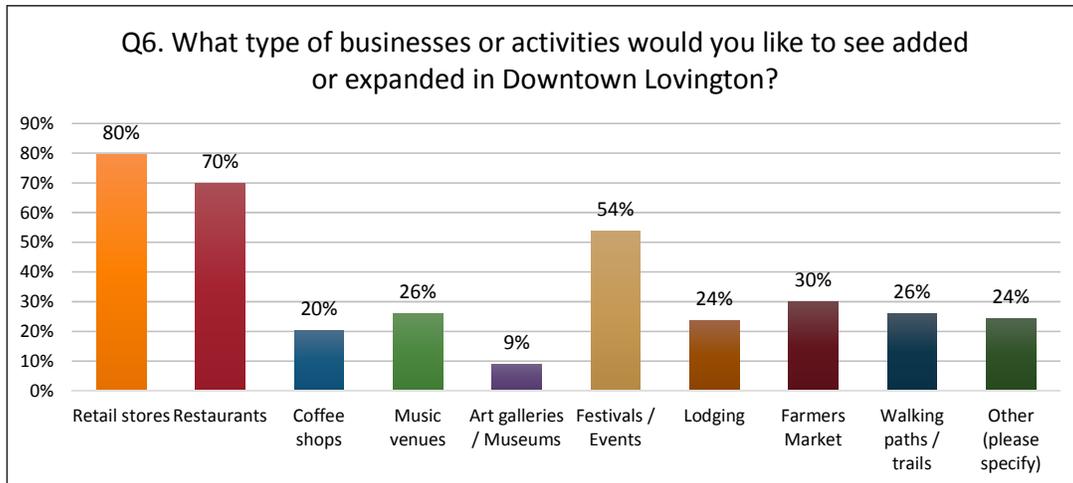
Q1. Do you live in Lovington?



Q2. Do you live in Downtown Lovington?





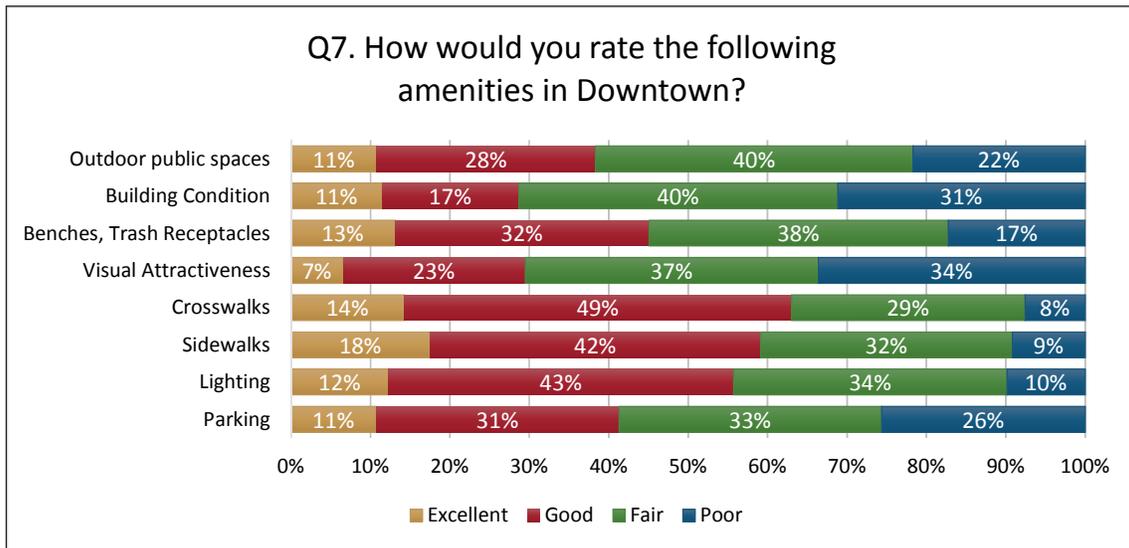


Other:

- Kid friendly activity centers
- A fun family entertainment place
- A marijuana dispensary
- Activities for kids
- Supermarkets
- Need a food store
- Grocery Store
- Super market
- A new store
- Just make the roads drivable
- A new grocery store would be very nice
- Public Restrooms
- Public Restrooms
- Nicer restaurants
- Walking paths
- New Grocery store
- Marijuana dispensaries
- Adult shops!
- Ice cream shops
- Park for kids with autism since there is a high percentage here in Lovington
- Things so we don't have to drive to Hobbs for everything
- Kid entertainment
- Try contacting Walmart we could use one
- Stores open after 5 and on Saturdays. I work 8-5 in Hobbs when I get to town there nothing stores open so I have to back to Hobbs to buy thing like pvc pipe or a white shirt for a kid in school for example or something for a school project.
- Any retail that will draw attention to Lovington and make people want to spend money here instead of going everywhere else and we need more than one grocery store. Bobs isn't enough for all the people that live here because their prices are too high and honestly, it's just not that good of a selection. I've lived here for like 30 years and we've got way more people now vs then, and only one grocery store now I go shop in Hobbs

because I refuse to pay those prices and it's ridiculous that Lovington keeps getting fuller but has no options also need something cool for kids maybe similar to the core but for LOVINGTON

- Craft Stores
- More things for Kids/students to do
- Grocery Store
- Book Store and Specialty shops



Q8. If your answer to any of the above is fair or poor, what would you suggest to improve it?

- Finish
- Work with owners in down town to work on building conditions.
- STOP building new buildings, restore old buildings that are already downtown and use them. The empty run down historic buildings make our downtown look undesirable. Clean them up and use them.
- Get the public more involved with cleaning up around Lovington. Also the city employees need to drive around and see what needs to be fixed. Lovington has so much potential if more people got involved.
- Sidewalks need to be renovated parking is not great and most buildings need to be renovated or occupied. They look displeasing and old with most of the buildings being empty and not updated.
- Updating
- Add a few more trash receptacles and tax the building owners a higher rate for keeping our down town in despair. Also add an addendum to their building contracts that they be up to code before renting or selling the structures to entice new entrepreneurs to the area.
- Just some general face-lift and updating
- A lot of the buildings are old, outdated, and in need of repair. Being old is fine - can add charm if kept in good repair! I don't know what the answer is, but perhaps set some type of guidelines for downtown structures and actually hold owners accountable for meeting and maintaining them! If something is already in place for this, then someone needs to do their job! Also, it's not just downtown - coming into Lovington from any direction you see numerous "ugly", old, in need of repair buildings! Why would anyone want to move here or open new businesses in a town that looks as if "who cares?"
- Lower the cost of rent for the open spaces so some good small businesses can come in and fill up all the empty spaces on Main Street.

- Downtown is not all that Lovington has. Fix the intersection in Lovington water, sewer, streets, sure don't need walk long way to park. Need leadership quit letting state run city
- Downtown will never look good if the surrounding areas (and all of Lovington) continues to have old abandoned and half standing buildings.
- "Update the outside of the buildings, even make it look like an old west town with the wood. Make it appealing to the eye!
- The sidewalk on Main is at an angle which makes it hard for those who are handicap, elderly, or struggle walking.
- Everything definitely needs to be more handicap accessible. Cornerstone needs a drive-thru.
- Funding to update the exterior of buildings. Try planting some flowers in the plaza next to the movie theater.
- There is not enough parking. The biggest issue facing the downtown area is the poor road quality. Washington Ave. and Love St. are in very bad condition. Love St. floods when it rains. I think that it would be an eyesore to build a restroom at the corner of Main and Washington in front of the courthouse.
- I feel a lot of the buildings are vacant and run down. I can't see spending tax money to repair or buy buildings downtown when the city streets have holes in them you can bury a tank in. The walking trail and building an out house on the courthouse lawn are an example of wasting money.
- Needs cleaning
- Do something with the abandoned buildings, if they are too old to fix, then tear them down. If not, the owners should be held accountable and fix them up and keep the properties maintained to look presentable. Empty lots should be maintained and cleaned from trash and debris at least once a month. The streets needs to be fixed and keep the big trucks off of them. Fix the drainage system so that way standing water from the rain will stop ruining them.
- Clean the buildings up or tear them down and start new.
- Exterior improvements on stores and/or buildings that are empty.
- Any improvement to the parking would be great!
- Utilize the empty dilapidated buildings, or at least make improvements to their outer physical appearance. Add more lighting with nostalgic looking street lamps. Add a median on Main Street with greenery and trees (think Artesia Main Street). Add more benches/tables/seating areas up and down Main Street.
- Beautification
- Some of the sidewalks have spots where they could cause a fall.
- Get rid of at least one of the traffic lights at the courthouse. There is absolutely positively no reason or need for both of those traffic lights.
- Better parking. Giving incentives and help businesses with store front improvements.
- Buildings need to be up dated, sideways, the street, more retail stores, more trash bins
- Angle parking at courthouse is hard to back out into traffic. Not sure there is a fix & parallel would eliminate too many parking spots. Making streets wider is not an option without moving buildings; reducing to a single lane would only cause traffic jams. Parallel parking North & South of courthouse is also not good because of being too narrow, again, no solution without moving buildings.
- If the area plans to expand there needs to be better parking and lighting for it. As is, it is a nice small gathering space, but there really isn't much to draw people to stay and browse.
- Stop wasting resources doing sidewalk upgrades and spend a little on landscaping and paint
- Upgrade store fronts
- Better parking
- Downtown needs to be cleaned up. There are street lights around the square that do not work so areas are dark. Where the construction is taking place and water lines have busted the roads have been patched but not

properly fixed. There are several empty buildings and only 3 restaurants located in the downtown area and 2 of them don't have regular hours of operation for evenings and weekends.

- Some of the buildings downtown need a face-lift, more awnings on buildings, more trees that are kept up, better lighting on buildings, store fronts need to look inviting, better signage on business, interesting signage for business's off of Main Street. A more unique looking downtown.
- Almost all downtown business must improve their building to attract shoppers.
- Some good "TLC". The downtown area needs major improvements as far as business condition is concerned. This will then hopefully improve visual attractiveness. Along with this it would be nice to see some increase in restaurants.
- I don't know; this is such an old town and the necessary improvements would be expensive. Buildings are old, empty, and need lots of updating. Bob's has a monopoly on everything, which is annoying. The owners of spaces that are for rent charge high prices for rent. Parking can be a pain because angled spaces are difficult, especially when trying to back up because they're so close to the street and oncoming traffic, that or you're having to parallel park. Plus some places don't have enough or convenient enough parking
- More trees, updated buildings, replaced broken windows, more retail shops and restaurants. Repaved streets, safer side street parking.
- New painting
- Better parking mostly and walk way/path incorporating benches and trash receptacles
- Lower the rent so people can afford to run a business, offer things for families and children, try fixing the streets.
- Something more for public with kids and not just focus on the middle of main street is a long road with other businesses on it that never get anything because they are located not in middle of main.
- Repair the sidewalks, add benches, flowers
- More parking
- More maintenance
- Demolition
- The people that own the empty building should be made to keep them up as well as the businesses that are open for business should be maintained, painted windows decorated so on. Downtown is definitely not inviting.
- Improved landscaping in front of businesses, improved drainage, cosmetic improvements on businesses.
- Everything in Lovington could be better and more entertaining and more abundant and nicer we are a small town we should look attractive all over the entire town not just the courthouse lawn fix these roads too they are ridiculous and so ugly
- Main street is a state highway that is in terrible condition. NM regulations & permitting process make it very tough and expensive for property owners to fix up their buildings. If there were plenty of retail stores downtown that people shopped there would not be enough parking.
- More lighting, benches, trash cans
- Make old courthouse area into a park. Bring in more stores now instead of hearing its gonna happen actually do it
- Converting old court house location into park
- The city needs to paint/repair City Hall, Magistrate Court Building and the old Fire Department Building. Fran Atchley garden looks unkempt.
- Painting the buildings and cleaning up around them. Something should be done with the Old Gibson building. Lovington is just looking like a run down ghost town!
- Owners should improve their properties, not the city!

- The middle Main Street area isn't bad but the north end and the south end look bad. Buildings are run down and the over all look and "feel" is really bad.
- Overall appearance and update buildings or get rid of unused spaces
- More family activities
- Put in benches all around downtown area. Actually paint the crosswalks more than once every couple of years
- Not sure, Lovington seems to struggle to keep business in Lovington!
- Parking is horrendous and I believe there are things you cannot control from visual attractiveness.
- Clean it up and make it more inviting. Too many empty buildings and trash.
- Run down / empty buildings and storefronts
- Use nearby empty lots for parking
- Empty buildings are an eyesore. Window decor is an option to cover the emptiness. More recycling bins and trash cans need to be made available.
- Clean them up, better lighting that actually works
- Follow through on previous projects, renew the pocket park, clean up the landscaping that was not done correctly on Central
- More benches and trash receptacles, refurbish or remove old building, create pocket parks

