



Lufkin Certified Retirement Community Initiative

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Lufkin Post's Near Perfect Score in Becoming Inaugural Texas Certified Retirement Community

The City of Lufkin's Certified Retirement Community Initiative Committee was notified late Monday that Lufkin has indeed become one of the State of Texas' Inaugural three communities to enjoy the "Texas Certified Retirement Community Certification". Mayor Jack Gorden stated, "Lufkin has been green, clean, and safe, just what lots of folks are looking for. But becoming a certified retirement community adds a new dimension to verification of the quality of life we offer. Our future is bright, and we welcome those looking for the uniqueness of small town good life combined with the best attributes of metro areas"

To become certified, a community of Lufkin's population must score a minimum of 150 pt's out of a total available 185 pt's. The Texas Department of Agriculture graded Lufkin's application with a near perfect 180 pt's with some members of the volunteer committee that also scored applications indeed scoring Lufkin with a perfect score of 185! "Obviously we are excited to receive the certification. There was a tremendous amount of work that went into our application and involved a large number of folks from our community. I am very thankful to them as well as our City of Lufkin Economic Development staff, the Lufkin/Angelina County Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Partnership. All of these entities were very instrumental in making this effort a success." stated Trey Henderson Chairman of the Certified Retirement Community Committee

Lufkin's Certified Retirement Community Committee is a cooperative effort between the Lufkin Angelina County Chamber of Commerce, the Lufkin Angelina County Economic Development Partnership, and the Lufkin 4B Economic Development Corporation and is primary composed of Chamber members with an interest in seeing Lufkin attract the baby boomer generation as one of its economic development initiatives. Why? Because reports show that today's retirees are looking for much more than a place to retire. They are looking for places to start their dream business, participate in community volunteerism opportunities, mentor today's youth, and assist young business people via sharing their vast experience to name only a few reasons. The Baby Boomer generation represents the largest, wealthiest, best educated generation in history with the potential to make a tremendous impact on local economies. For example, baby boomers current own approximately 77 percent of the nation's assets, 80% of the nations savings accounts, 68% of the nations money market accounts, and 48% of new cars in America and you realize a cohort that cannot be ignored.

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The Chamber of Commerce will administer the Certified Retirement Community program and the recruitment of the “zoomer” cohort which is a term describing the active affluent baby boomers. “It is an outstanding achievement to become one of Texas first three Certified Retirement Communities and certainly provides credibility to what we already knew – this is a great part of Texas!. “Now it becomes our duty to market Lufkin and Angelina County to potential retirees across the nation and work to entice them to visit and see why our area is such a special place.” commented Jerry Huffman, President of the Lufkin Angelina County Chamber of Commerce. We are already working diligently to develop a dynamic marketing effort to achieve that goal.” Currently the Chamber already receives requests for information by perspective retirees daily and the new www.retireinlufkin.com website received over 47,000 hits in its first 30 days. Additionally, efforts are ongoing to develop additional elements of the overall marketing effort.

Although the creation of good paying “primary jobs” remains the main focus of Lufkin and Angelina County’s economic development efforts, the Certification and ongoing recruitment of “zoomers” is certainly an element of our community and area’s economic development effort and an element that compliments the other focus areas of the program further diversifying the communities economy. The recruitment of “zoomers” can enhance new business start ups, provide valuable consulting services to current companies, and certainly enhance the sales tax revenue of the area. Additionally this program can spur additional specialized residential development as well as possibly have a positive impact on the renovation and revitalization of our historic downtown area by the opening of small businesses and even the conversion of loft space on the upper floors of vacant downtown buildings. “This is very exciting and the really reinforces what we have felt about our community all along”, said Jim Wehmeier Director of Economic Development for the City of Lufkin. “Not only are we a suitable place to enjoy retirement, but actually a “”perfect” place to enjoy the best years of your life, with opportunities galore for entrepreneurial endeavors, volunteerism, recreation, and of course some of the best healthcare on the face of the planet. We are incredibly excited that others see the same quality we do and have recognized us with a perfect or near perfect score”.

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