



Mayor Bob Murphy

## Letter from the Mayor

### Use Voter's Guide, Candidates Forum to learn about City Council candidates

November brings one of the most important duties we have in this great democracy: the right to vote. Each year registered voters have the opportunity to choose the people who will guide public policy on the local, state or national level, as well as let their opinion be known on a variety of ballot issues.

In Lakewood, even-numbered years generally focus on state and national candidates, while odd-numbered years like 2009 feature municipal elections. Lakewood's political geography is divided into five wards, each with just under 30,000

residents. Every ward elects two representatives to serve a four-year term on City Council, and those terms are staggered so that only one seat from each ward is up for election every two years.

This election season certainly seems quiet when compared with 2008, when the state, national and presidential elections brought out voters in all-time record numbers. Without the constant barrage of TV, radio and print ads, it is understandable that many people, busy with their own lives, may not be paying close attention right now. But I always like to remind everyone that local government provides the services closest to home that we rely on nearly every day: public safety, street maintenance, traffic signals, snowplowing, parks, open space, bike trails and community centers. Local government also has the responsibility to make the land-use decisions that are so vital to the City's long-term future,

and often so critically important in our individual neighborhoods.

This issue of *Looking @ Lakewood* features a Voters' Guide, offering an opportunity for Lakewood residents to get to know our City Council candidates. Also, a recent Candidates Forum sponsored by the business associations was videotaped, and this issue lists the times the forum will be re-played on KLTV Channel 8. Hopefully this additional background will help us all make informed decisions when we cast our ballots. Finally, please note that this year's election is by mail ballot only. We should start seeing ballots in our mailboxes before mid-October.

Of course, City Council elections often mean it's time to say goodbye to individuals who have chosen public service as one way to give back to the community. Ward 4 Council member Doug Anderson served one term and decided not to run for re-election. Doug did an outstanding job of representing his constituents, and we all thank him for his service and wish him well. We hope he stays involved in local issues.

Council member Debbie Koop will not be running due to term limits. It was my privilege

to work closely with Debbie representing the citizens of Ward 2 for six of her eight years on City Council. Debbie's strong family values carried over to her work, and we are grateful for her sincere and dedicated representation of the people and neighborhoods of rapidly changing northeast Lakewood.

Lakewood continues to be strong even through some challenging times, in part because of a long tradition of dedication and leadership from our volunteers and elected officials. If you have the opportunity, please take a moment to thank both Doug and Debbie for their years of service. And let's all do our best to familiarize ourselves with the candidates who will help shape Lakewood's future in the coming election.

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**Council Corner**  
Debbie Koop  
Council member

Ward 2

### Thank You Lakewood

"I am so proud to live in Lakewood. It's a great place to live, work and raise a family." I spoke these words eight years ago when I decided to run for City Council, and I still believe this to be true today. My husband, Scott, and I decided to move our family to Lakewood back in 1992 because of the quality of life this city had to offer – safe neighborhoods, beautiful parks, good schools and so close to everything.

I didn't plan on running for City Council back then. I just believed that strong neighborhoods and getting involved in your community are very important. When you can get people to come together and work toward a common goal, a lot can be accomplished. When I was asked to consider running for City Council, it was a big decision. I had two young children at the time (ages 6 and 9), and family had always

been very important to me. After much consideration, I decided to run for this position and to work hard devoting my time and energy toward helping maintain Lakewood's quality of life for our children and future generations.

It's hard to believe that my time is almost up! I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to represent the people of Ward 2 and Lakewood for the past eight years and have found the experience very rewarding. I've had the pleasure of meeting and working along side so many who are as committed to Lakewood as my family and I are. I know that each and every person who I have served with on Council cares about what's best for our city. I think we've all shown that we're not just a Monday night council. We all spend endless hours each week educating ourselves about the issues, communicating with our constituents via phone, e-mail and in person, attending neighborhood and business association meetings, and serving on various committees. It was an honor to serve with former Mayor Steve Burkholder, and I learned a lot from Mayor Bob Murphy while we served as Ward 2 City Council members together. I'm proud to have him as our mayor today.

We have some of the most dedicated em-

ployees and staff here in Lakewood. My experience has been nothing but the best while working with them on a daily basis addressing important issues and concerns that affect our community. They have been led by now-retired City Manager Mike Rock who has helped Lakewood become the first-class city it is today. I know that our new City Manager Kathy Hodgson will continue to lead us in the right direction.

Some of my most special memories as council member have been while spending time with my neighbors in Ward 2. I've had fun and made a lot of friends along the way while attending neighborhood picnics and ice cream socials, helping with neighborhood cleanups, judging holiday lighting contests, singing Christmas carols in the snow and cheering on runners during the Colfax Marathon. I will always remember the day I helped knock down the old Kmart building near Colfax and Wadsworth. I made a lot of people nervous thinking I would tip the bulldozer over on top of them! I am happy to report no one was hurt.

When I first was considering whether to run for City Council, I worried about all the time involved and how it would affect my family. I can honestly say that it has been a wonderful experience that we've been able to

share together over the years. My daughters are now 15 and 17 years old. They've witnessed how cooperation can achieve positive changes and learned the importance of helping others by volunteering in the community. I wouldn't have been able to effectively do this job had it not been for the complete support and understanding of the time involved from my husband, Scott.

I could not end this without thanking Council member Cindy Baroway who I've had the privilege of partnering with for the past two years. Cindy is very dedicated and cares about Ward 2's citizens and neighborhoods as much as I do.

Debbie Koop  
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City Manager  
Kathy Hodgson

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