

# Voter's Guide



Ward 5

## Diana M. Allen

**Occupation:** Public Information Officer, Westminster Fire Dept.

**Contact Information:**

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### 1) How long have you lived in Lakewood and how long have you lived in the ward for which you seek a seat?

I have lived in Lakewood and Ward 5 for 10 years.

### 2) What are your top three qualifications to run for public office?

**Fiscal Responsibility.** I've served on the Budget and Audit committee for the last four years. In that time the City's budget has been balanced, reserves (emergency fund) have tripled, I supported eliminating the municipal tax on food and advocated for financial transparency. It's important to invest in services that citizens really need, especially when everyone is struggling. However, we have to make sure to be conservative enough not to risk the future of those services. It's all about balance.

**Looking Ahead.** There is a lot happening in Lakewood -- St. Anthony's Hospital, West Corridor Light Rail, and development in Rooney Valley are just a few examples. It's important to focus on what Lakewood needs now and, equally important, how decisions may affect our community years from now. We need to look at Lakewood through the eyes of our own citizens as well as through the eyes of those that may want to live, work or invest in our community. What keeps people here? We need to respect the flavor of neighborhoods and the great open space we have. What may attract those that could improve our City by providing more jobs or becoming good neighbors or building quality development? We'd better pay attention to that aspect as well so years from now we all still want to live in Lakewood.

**Sound Decision Making.** It's easy to agree with everything everyone says. It's easy to blindly follow a political philosophy. What's hard is looking at all sides of

an issue, finding out what is involved, who is affected, and what the long-term ramifications may be. It's important to me to make good, sound decisions for our community. I make decisions for our city based on the facts and what is best for Ward 5 and all of Lakewood, not what's popular or easy.

### 3) Why are you running and what do you hope to accomplish?

I love living in Lakewood; it would be an honor to serve on Council for another 4 years and work to keep our City a great. I hope to continue to serve on the budget and audit committee, to find the resources to get a neighborhood clean up program started, to help the Council make sound, fair decisions about new growth and continue to represent Lakewood in cooperative efforts like the Colorado Municipal League.

### 4) What is your vision for Lakewood?

My vision for Lakewood is strong neighborhoods, a safe community, well-maintained and abundant parks and open space, good services like recreation centers and street maintenance, and new growth/redevelopment to enhance our community. Quality of life is key.

### 5) How would you handle issues that create opposing views among your constituents?

This happens all the time, whether issues are simple or complex. For example, when speed bumps are installed in a neighborhood to slow down traffic and make the street safer I will undoubtedly get calls complaining about them -- despite the fact that the speed bumps could never have been installed without majority approval of the residents on the affected street. The best way to handle opposing views is to listen to each side, identify what their issues are and bring the groups together if possible to come to a compromise. However, it's important to note that when you make decisions (just like with speed bumps), it's unlikely everyone is going to be happy. It's important to base the decision on what is fair and best for most.

### 6) What distinguishes you from your opponent?

My experience and perspective distinguishes me from my opponent. I feel my background is community based, that I look at issues from a neighborhood and local business standpoint. I believe the City of Lakewood is there to provide services to residents and plan for the community's future. Though it's important to be aware of outside political issues, it is not the priority. Using Lakewood's resources to bring the best services to citizens is the priority.



Ward 5

## Natalie Menten

**Occupation:** Worked side-by-side with my husband in our transmission shop for nearly 20 years.

**Contact Information:** 303-980-8834 or www.NatalieMenten.com

### 1) How long have you lived in Lakewood and how long have you lived in the ward for which you seek a seat?

Lakewood resident for 21 years, in Ward 5 for 19 years.

### 2) What are your top three qualifications to run for public office?

Innovative, determined leader with ability to initiate and craft solutions, such as the Lakewood grocery tax repeal. Fiscally conservative, I've helped save taxpayers' millions eliminating inefficient spending. Problem solver who thinks outside the box and works until a solution is found.

### 3) Why are you running and what do you hope to accomplish?

My passion is improving public policy and I've happily dedicated thousands of hours helping our community, like the repeal of the city grocery tax; requiring government spending transparency; eliminating stealth tax elections, which in recent years had only 2% voter turnout, by requiring that every registered voter be sent a ballot when a tax

### 7) How do you define the role of a City Council member?

A City Council member works with the Council and citizens to set policy for the City of Lakewood. The Council is responsible for hiring and supervising the City Manager, City Attorney, and Head Municipal Judge. The Council identifies the goals and priorities of the City and advises the City Manager what direction the City should take. A good City Council member is knowledgeable about Lakewood and regional issues, listens and responds to residents, is open to new ideas, works well on a team but is not afraid to voice a difference of opinion, and can make tough decisions for the good of Lakewood.

measure is being proposed; plus much else. I'd help create an inviting and warm environment for concerned citizens and they'll know they have a City Councilor willing to help them. We need a representative in Ward 5 who insists a plan be completely beneficial or it goes back to the drawing board, and that is what I'll do. While talking to citizens I hear the same problems, present for years, yet current administration doesn't work to solve the issues. I look forward to solving problems.

### 4) What is your vision for Lakewood?

Strong, vital community with good jobs, where people know the government is there to serve them. I recently spoke with small merchants in Ward 5 who have thriving businesses but the city drew a plan to redevelop that area, make the merchants move and put in a chain store that would make more revenue. The merchants joined together and paid for legal representation to fight off the plan. Ironically, the merchants are still thriving, but the chain store went bankrupt. I envision a Lakewood that protects and promotes businesses regardless of their size.

### 5) How would you handle issues that create opposing views among your constituents?

Early, open, and honest communication, especially in controversial zoning issues and major redevelopment projects like Wadsworth Boulevard, which are going to have a huge impact on Ward 5 property owners.

### 6) What distinguishes you from your opponent?

My first priority is citizens and businesses and helping their nest eggs grow.

### 7) How do you define the role of a City Council member?

A City Councilor should be an advocate for citizens and businesses, not just listening to problems and passing it off to staff, but working to solve issues. A City Councilor should protect the community, not only at the local level, but also in state and federal issues. The average person doesn't have the time or energy to keep an eye on all the public policy changes that occur every day affecting their lives or business. A good City Councilor is pro-active watching out for those just busy trying to survive, keep a roof over their head and food on their table.

**Note:**  
Looking @ Lakewood did not edit the candidates' responses or fix spelling, grammar, punctuation or typos.