LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER

MASTER PLAN

2017-2027







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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SPECIAL THANKS

Recognition goes to the hundreds of residents who participated in the development of this plan including key conversations with:

40 West Arts District

Alameda Gateway Community Association

Belmar Park neighbors

Belmar Park visitors

Cider Days Festival attendees

Educators

Heritage, Culture and the Arts volunteers

Jefferson County Open Space

Lakewood Heritage Center partners

Lakewood Heritage Center programs users

Lakewood Historical Society

Lakewood Historic Preservation Commission

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A special thank you to former Lakewood Heritage Center employees Jeffrey Murray, Justin Greenstein and Marcus Espinosa who contributed to the development of this plan.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The foundation of the City of Lakewood has been, and will always be, built on its citizens. The city's history belongs to the people who created this vibrant and flourishing community and who continue to enjoy everything it has to offer. As such, the Lakewood Heritage Center belongs to the citizens and serves as a living embodiment of the city – past, present and future.

Citizen input and engagement is at the heart of the Heritage Center's new Master Plan for 2017-2027. Extensive input was gathered via open house events, online surveys (conducted in both English and Spanish), as well as planning discussions during Cider Days. The engagement, solicited from the fall of 2016 through the winter of 2017, also included roundtables with historians, business owners, civic leaders, volunteers, museum visitors and partners as well as elected officials.

The dialogue centered on the city's history and the role the Lakewood Heritage Center plays in highlighting and preserving its rich cultural past. The public feedback proved extremely valuable and informed the priorities, goals and action plans for the Heritage Center's next decade. And with the City of Lakewood's 50th anniversary in 2019, the updated Master Plan is timely in contemplating an expansion of themes important to the city's history.

This 2017 Master Plan builds on the original 1996 plan that established the Lakewood Heritage Center as a 20th century museum to honor the city's past. The 1996 Master Plan focused on Lakewood history from 1900 through the early 1960s. It established four major centers of interpretation: the Belmar Estate; the Family Farm, the Colfax Hub and the Future Center. As a result of the 1996 Master Plan, the Visitor Center and its exhibition galleries were constructed, as was the amphitheater. The Colfax Hub was established through the addition of Gil & Ethel's (hair salon and five-and-dime store), White Way Grill, Estes Motel and the Peerless gas station. The 1996 plan established the current parking area, traffic flow and landscaping and established the location for staff offices, as well as the framework for the daily operational plan.

The 1996 Master Plan established these site goals:

- To provide a broad spectrum of interactive learning experiences for the community and region.
- To offer programming based on public interest, including quality family events.
- · To utilize innovative methods of education.
- To be fiscally responsible.
- To provide responsible stewardship and study of the physical evidence of Lakewood's past and present through sound collections management.

The 2017 Master Plan continues the work that remains to be completed from the 1996 plan and incorporates fresh community input and recommendations to modernize and enhance the plan for the next decade.

In addition, the Heritage Center's Mission Statement was revised and a new Vision Statement was developed. Both are included in this plan.

WHAT IS THE LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER?

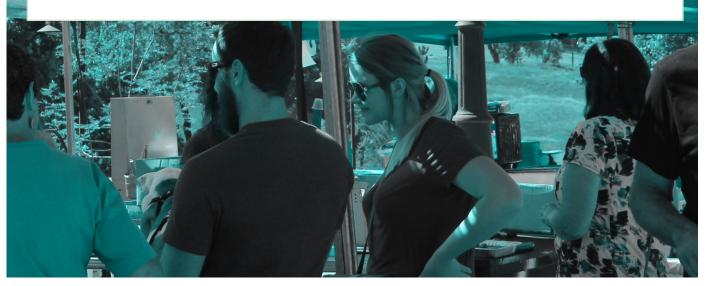
Located in Belmar Park, the Lakewood Heritage Center is a unique history park and museum comprised of 13 historic buildings, exhibition galleries, a festival area, an outdoor amphitheater and walking paths on 15 acres. The Heritage Center houses and cares for more than 35,000 preserved artifacts that showcase the city's history dating back to the early 20th century. Tours, educational programs, outdoor concerts, festivals and rental facilities are available.

LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER 801 S. Yarrow St., Lakewood, CO 80226 303.987.7850. | Lakewood.org/HeritageCenter

THE FOLLOWING 10 GOALS, OUTLINED IN DETAIL IN THIS REPORT, WERE DEVELOPED TO BUILD UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE 1996 MASTER PLAN.

- Assess outstanding items from the 1996 Master Plan and complete as appropriate.
- 2 Expand the Lakewood Heritage Center interpretive stories to be inclusive of the entire 20th century time period 1901-2000.
- Add three new collecting, interpretive and programming themes:
 - The incorporation of Lakewood as a city
 - The role of health and wellness in the development of the city
 - The influence of the Denver Ordnance Plant/Federal Center to the development of the city
- 4 Enhance and expand the visitor experience.
- 5 Serve as the focal outdoor festival area for the City of Lakewood.

- 6 Ensure the best and most effective use of the 15 acres that comprise the Lakewood Heritage Center, and of the current and future buildings and their locations.
- Become a critical and accessible resource for historic information related to Lakewood.
- Create a strong identity, brand, and position of visibility for the Lakewood Heritage Center.
- Advance and sustain the Museum and Heritage Center site through new funding sources.
- 10 Utilize national standards and best practices in the care and presentation of the Lakewood community's collection and history.



CENTER HOSTS MAJOR

ANNUAL EVENTS SUCH

AS CIDER DAYS, SOUNDS

EXCITING! SUMMER

CONCERTS, ROCKIN'

BLOCK PARTY AND THE

MAYOR'S TREE LIGHTING/

LAKEWOOD LIGHTS, AND

SERVES AS A SOCIAL VENUE

FOR WEDDINGS, FAMILY

REUNIONS AND OTHER

CELEBRATIONS.



INTRODUCTION

The 2017-2027 Master Plan for the Lakewood Heritage Center builds upon the 1996 Master Plan that established the Heritage Center's focus on the 20th century history of the City of Lakewood.

In the 1996 Master Plan, the Heritage Center was affirmed as the City of Lakewood's history museum, and it has proven itself with excellence in collecting and preserving its collection, and in its exhibitions. Today, the Heritage Center houses and exhibits more than 35,000 artifacts and provides professional museum-level care for these.

In the 1996 plan, enhancements to the Lakewood Heritage Center were planned that would also transform the site into a community festival and gathering space, and the site currently flourishes in this role. It hosts major annual events such as Cider Days, Sounds Exciting! Summer Concerts, Rockin' Block Party and the Mayor's Tree Lighting/ Lakewood Lights, and serves as a social venue for weddings, family reunions and other celebrations. In 1996, the Heritage Center was envisioned as a rich source for educational programming for students K-12, as well as for adult visitors. It has fulfilled this goal through partnerships with schools not only in Lakewood but also throughout Metro Denver.

Above all, the Heritage Center is loved and used extensively by residents and visitors of Lakewood. Thousands come for events. Thousands more, including dog walkers and runners, use the paths and trails that link the Heritage Center to the rest of Belmar Park. With no gates or admission, the Lakewood Heritage Center is open to all and when admission is assessed - for example at summer concerts - it is planned as affordable family entertainment.

After 20 years and many accomplishments, the Lakewood Heritage Center is well established as a city jewel. But Lakewood will not rest on its laurels. The center is a living icon that will continue to grow and improve the user experience. While the 1996 plan provided a roadmap for interpretation of Lakewood history from 1901 through the early 1960s, it asserted that "future generations" would want to complete the 20th century story of Lakewood. Today, with the passing of time, it is possible to look at the 1960s-1990s and identify key Lakewood events, buildings, and stories that should be included.

The 1996 Master Plan was ambitious, particularly with regard to the call for examples of endangered historic structures to be relocated to the Lakewood Heritage Center for interpretation. Some were completed such as the relocation and restoration of Gil and Ethel's, Estes Motel and White Way Grill. Some have yet to be fulfilled and completed, such as a Lane's Tavern replica. With 35,000 artifacts, the Heritage Center's permanent collection capacity is strained. With thousands of annual visitors, its basic infrastructure also is challenged by limited access to amenities including outdoor restrooms, food service, and adequate parking for larger community gatherings and celebrations. The Visitor Center, as envisioned in the 1996 plan, included only two museum galleries – one a permanent exhibition and the other a rotating exhibit space to address different aspects of Lakewood history. The new plan addresses whether two galleries adequately allow the Heritage Center to expand its narrative through 2000.

The 2017 master planning process was shaped by extensive public input and dialogue. More than 700 residents provided input to the plan through open house events, roundtables, interviews, a bilingual survey in English and Spanish, and engagement at community events. The public's enthusiastic participation in the process directly impacts every facet of this plan which extends and adds to the themes and stories of the 1996 foundational Master Plan.

This planning process asked fundamental questions to the public: how do people use the Lakewood Heritage Center, what do they like most, and what would they like to see it address and include in the future? The engagement focused on various themes and sought direction on how to improve the visitor experience and increase the relevance of the center to residents.



BUILDING ON THE 1996 MASTER PLAN

The 1996 Master Plan formalized the Lakewood Heritage Center's focus on the 20th century. The Heritage Center opened in 1976. However, the idea for it was formed conceptually in 1972 following a voter referendum to purchase what is now Belmar Park from the estate of May Bonfils-Stanton, whose Belmar Estate had occupied the land at the corner of South Wadsworth Avenue and West Alameda Avenue. Her fabled mansion was torn down to meet the stipulations of her will.

Other outbuildings, however, were spared. The estate's original calving barn, tractor shed, auction house, John Deere Barn, and caretaker's cottage remained intact and formed the core of what would become the Lakewood Heritage Center collection of historic buildings.

In 1974, the Lakewood Historical Society was formed in large measure to develop the initial collection of buildings and archives. In 1978, the society turned the Heritage Center over to the City of Lakewood.

By 1996, almost 20 years after the City took on administration of the Heritage Center, there were 13 buildings on the site. These included the grouping left from the Bonfils-Stanton estate and three others: the Ralston Crossing Country School, given to the City by the R-1 School District; the Hallack-Webber Ranch House, which was moved to the site in 1980 and was used at the time as a visitor center; and the Streer-Peterson House (c. 1872-1885), which was saved from demolition and moved to the Heritage Center site in 1986, with restoration completed in 1989. Historic outbuildings were also retained including a pump house, an outhouse, a former interurban trolley stop, a chicken coop and a windmill. A Conservation and Preservation building was constructed in 1989 to house the growing collection.

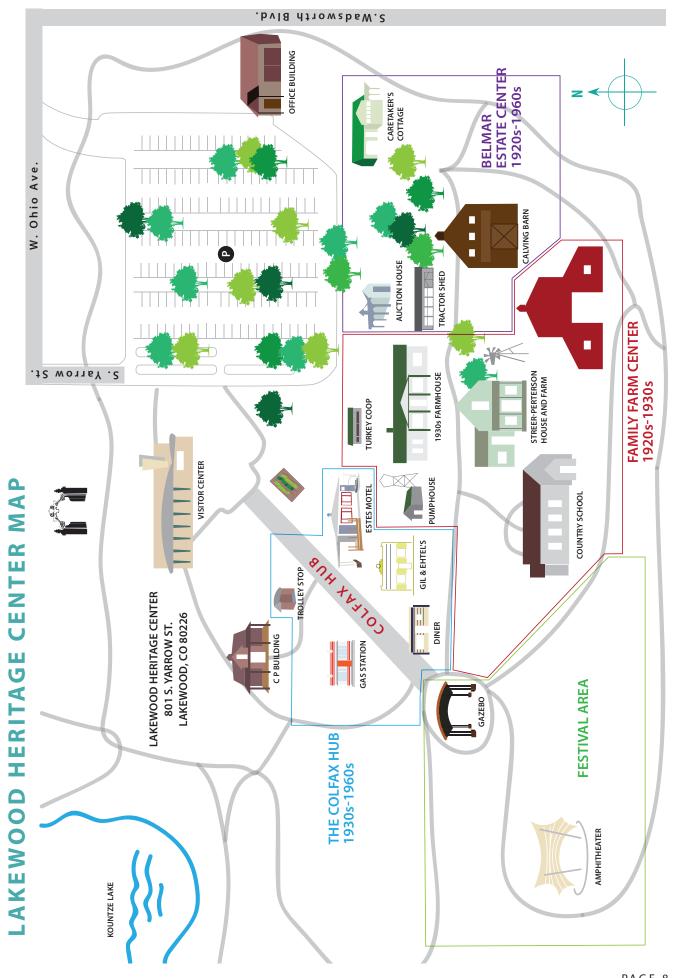
THE 1996 MASTER PLAN ESTABLISHED FOUR INTERPRETIVE "CENTERS" OR AREAS OF FOCUS FOR THE LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER SITE, WORKING WITH THE EXISTING HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND SETTING PRIORITIES FOR EXPANDING THE COLLECTION:

- The Family Farm Center of the 1920s-30s, contrasting a 1920s truck farm with a Depression-era turkey ranch, the country schoolhouse and the pump house
- The Belmar Estate Center, originally from 1920s-1930s but later redefined from the 1920s-1960s, interpreting and contrasting the affluent world of May Bonfils-Stanton with the community culture of the family farm
- The Colfax Hub, interpreting commercial growth in Lakewood and the surrounding region during the 1930s through the early 1960s

A portion of the grounds of the Lakewood Heritage Center was set aside to be defined later, to interpret the "growth of the diversity of community culture from 1960 until the turn of the century," which is the basis for the 2017 Master Plan.

The interpretive centers were each defined by historic structures that serve as macro artifacts, enabling visitors to step back in time upon entry.

The 1996 Master Plan also established the festival area and the Visitor Center, intended to serve both as a community gathering space and as home for museum exhibitions.



SINCE 1996, THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE MASTER PLAN HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. THE VISITOR CENTER AND AMPHITHEATER/FESTIVAL AREA WERE CONSTRUCTED. THE FAMILY FARM AND BELMAR ESTATE ARE NEARING COMPLETION AS INTERPRETIVE CENTERS. THE COLFAX HUB WAS ESTABLISHED. SEVERAL ENDANGERED HISTORIC BUILDINGS WERE MOVED TO THE SITE UTILIZING THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA OR GUIDELINES OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR CONSIDERATION OF BUILDING SELECTION:

- That the structure fits within the Heritage Center time frame and themes
- That it be a designated Lakewood landmark (i.e. that it be recognized as locally significant. No official Lakewood landmark process existed) and be at risk of demolition
- That the structure be the most appropriate of its type in Lakewood
- That the structure be the most appropriate of its type in the region
- That any built-as-new structure be based on documentation of a demolished Lakewood structure

In addition, consideration will be given to the physical characteristics of any new structure brought on site to ensure it fits within the scale, size and character of the proposed location.



THE 2017-2027 MASTER PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT

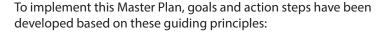
The Lakewood Heritage Center connects the community and its generations to the 20th century history and heritage of Lakewood by collecting, preserving, and exhibiting artifacts and through engaging and innovative programs, experiences and community events.

This revised Lakewood Heritage Center mission statement provides the foundation for this Master Plan. It informs all decisions and actions for the role of the Heritage Center, its collecting policy, its exhibitions, and its development and implementation of increasing highly engaging programming.

As part of the planning process, the Lakewood Heritage Center also has developed the following vision statement to offer a framework for the future of the ever-expanding Heritage Center.

VISION STATEMENT

The Vision is for the City of Lakewood, its residents and visitors, to benefit from a comprehensive and dynamic Heritage Center that engages all in multifaceted experiential learning, experiences and events telling the 20th century history of Lakewood. This provides the opportunity to weave the threads of our heritage into the tapestry of today's celebrations, for which the Heritage Center serves as a unique gathering space.





Excellence

Lakewood Heritage Center is committed to working towards the highest standards of museum practice in collecting, preserving, exhibiting, interpreting, and programming. Likewise, the Heritage Center is committed to ensuring an excellent experience for all who engage, from the passive visitor simply walking through to the researcher engaged in working with the collection to the volunteer presenting to a school group to the festival attendee at Cider Days.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is a value deeply held by the City of Lakewood and by the Heritage Center ensuring on-going community input in implementing this Master Plan and in exemplifying inclusion through this plan's increased focus on Lakewood's diverse communities.

Relevance

For residents to be fully engaged in and use the Lakewood Heritage Center, its exhibits, programs, classes, activities and events must be relevant in connecting the past to the present and future. As a whole, the Heritage Center must offer relevant and enjoyable experiences for visitors of all ages from Lakewood and beyond.

Stewardship

Lakewood Heritage Center is the steward of the community's collection of artifacts: the historic buildings, the many artifacts and archives it preserves. Stewardship includes care for the land and natural resources of the Heritage Center's location in Belmar Park, on-going evaluation and consideration of the Heritage Center site, the best and highest use of its collection of historic building artifacts, ensuring the best care for its collections, and the thoughtful addition of new artifacts to continue to interpret the history of Lakewood.



2017 MASTER PLAN GOALS

- Assess outstanding initiatives from the 1996 Master Plan and complete as appropriate.
- Expand the Lakewood Heritage Center's interpretive stories to be inclusive of the entire 20th century time period 1901-2000.
- Add three new collecting, interpretive, and programming themes:
 - The incorporation of Lakewood as a city
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- 4 Enhance and expand the visitor experience.
- Serve as the focal outdoor festival area for the City of Lakewood.

- Ensure the best and most effective use of the 15 acres that make up the Lakewood Heritage Center, and of the current and future buildings and their locations.
- Become an accessible resource for historic information related to Lakewood.
- Create a strong identity, brand, and position of visibility for the Lakewood Heritage Center.
- Advance and sustain the museum and site through new funding sources.
- Utilize national standards and best practices in the care and presentation of the Lakewood community's collection and history.

THE GOALS IN DETAIL

GOAL 1. ASSESS OUTSTANDING INITIATIVES FROM THE 1996 MASTER PLAN AND COMPLETE AS APPROPRIATE.

One of the challenges of rehabilitation and restoration of historic structures is the lengthy process of planning through execution. Conducting historic reviews, construction planning and securing funding is time intensive and can span years if not decades. This is why our master plans are considered living documents that can

overlap each other in fulfilling goals.

The Heritage Center site has several structures in process of rehabilitation. The Caretaker's Cottage – one of the original remaining Bonfils-Stanton structures from when the city first acquired the land – at the time of this publication, is undergoing its first phase of rehabilitation. The Calving Barn, another original structure remaining from the Bonfils-Stanton estate, was identified in the 1996 plan for restoration to its original structure, removing the decorative additions made in the 1970s. The Peerless Gas Station, moved to



the Heritage Center in 2011, is in the historical review phase. Other buildings called for in the 1996 Master Plan but not yet identified as endangered or reconstructed include small businesses representative of early retail establishments or increased travel along Colfax Avenue during the 1930s through the 1960s such as a Lane's Tavern replica. The 1996 Master Plan also called for a children's play area and for a family picnic area to be constructed. The addition of a "gracious garden" also was highlighted as a further interpretation of the Belmar Estate Center.

A fire station has long been planned as a partnership between the City of Lakewood and the West Metro Fire Rescue Foundation. The intention has been to construct an historic representation of the Lakewood-Mountair Fire Station #1 at the Heritage Center, to honor the significance of the Lakewood-Mountair fire district, which became the largest fire protection district in Colorado during the 1950s and 1960s. Lakewood's first fire truck and Heritage Center artifact "Booger Red" will be exhibited in one of the two garage bays.

Finally, a feasibility study is being conducted to determine if Interurban Car No. 25 could be relocated to the Heritage Center and operate on site. Car No. 25 currently is stored temporarily on the grounds of the Federal Center and will need to be relocated to a permanent site for exhibition and operation.

ACTION 1: Complete the restoration of historic buildings already at the Lakewood Heritage Center.

ACTION 2: Reevaluate and construct the elements called for in the 1996 plan, including a children's play area, a family picnic area, gracious garden, and reconstruction of Lane's Tavern.

ACTION 3: Convene a task force to study next steps for the planned fire station reinterpretation.

ACTION 4: Complete a feasibility study for a possible permanent location for the exhibition and operation of Interurban Car No. 25 at the Lakewood Heritage Center. Convene a task force charged with raising funds to construct a new home and track for Car No. 25 once a permanent location has been identified.

ACTION 5: Identify "missing" structures or find creative ways to interpret the themes of any missing structures to complete the Family Farm, Belmar Estate and Colfax Hub centers.

GOAL 2. EXPAND THE LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER'S INTERPRETIVE STORIES TO BE INCLUSIVE OF THE ENTIRE 20TH CENTURY TIME PERIOD 1901-2000.

Lakewood was incorporated in 1969, with several important steps leading up to that point. As the center of interpretation of the city's history, public feedback determined it is important for the Heritage Center to include the City's incorporation in its interpretive dates. This interpretative focus is foundational in recognition of the city's upcoming 50th anniversary in 2019.

Citizens emphasized it will become increasingly important to assess and add decades to the collection of objects, archival materials, and photographs from the later decades of the 20th century. Vernacular architecture representative of homes and businesses in Lakewood may become endangered by on-going development and may be appropriately considered for relocation to the Lakewood Heritage Center site. Key "moment in time" themes may become important in shaping the growing collection.

ACTION 1: Coordinate with the City Clerk's office and other departments to identify appropriate archival materials and artifacts regarding the founding of Lakewood as the core collection for this new theme of the museum. The goal is to have this completed in time for the city's 50th anniversary in 2019. Evaluate transferring appropriate items to the Lakewood Heritage Center.

ACTION 2: Create an updated permanent exhibit at the Visitor Center that expands and interprets the 20th century in Lakewood through 2000.

ACTION 3: Enhance the collection by adding appropriate archival materials and artifacts that complete the timeline.

GOAL 3. ADD THREE NEW COLLECTING, INTERPRETIVE, AND PROGRAMMING THEMES.

- The incorporation of Lakewood as a city
- The role of health and wellness in the development of the city
- The influence of the Denver Ordnance Plant/Federal Center to the development of the city

The public input in developing this Master Plan showed these three themes to be of importance to the residents of Lakewood.

Incorporation: This theme was defined through public input to include the history leading up to incorporation, and the steps involved in creating local government in a community that already, at the time of incorporation, had 90,000 residents. There are many facets to this history: Lakewood grew out of several water and fire districts, and had no municipal government for the 80 years leading up to incorporation. The Jefferson County sheriff's department provided policing. What factors led to incorporation? How did Lakewood's many and diverse neighborhoods come together? How did the first government become established? How did the city set up its police department and other city agencies?

Role of Health and Wellness: An early and important chapter in Lakewood's history was the establishment and operation of the Jewish Consumptives' Relief Society (JCRS) for tuberculosis patients. Founded in 1904, JCRS was a non-sectarian sanatorium for people with all stages of tuberculosis. Patients were treated free of charge, and people from throughout the United States and foreign countries came to Lakewood to heal. In 1954, JCRS changed its mission to cancer research and became the American Medical Center.



GOAL 3 CONTD. ADD THREE NEW COLLECTING, INTERPRETIVE, AND PROGRAMMING THEMES.

From its beginnings, health and wellness became established as a community value, one that has long been linked to Lakewood's emphasis on providing parks and open space for its residents to actively recreate. The desire for open space led to the creation of Belmar Park. Today, the city manages 101 parks totaling more than 7,100 acres of open space. These parks contain over 100 miles of trails for hiking, biking, running, and horseback riding.

Historical importance of the Federal Center: Another early influence in the development of Lakewood is the Denver Ordnance Plant/Federal Center. The Federal Center traces its roots back to 1940 when the federal government purchased 2,040 acres to build an ordnance plant and contracted with Remington Arms Company to produce small arms ammunition there. More than 200 buildings were rapidly constructed. At the height of World War II, the Federal Center employed 22,000. Today, it employs about 6,200 and occupies 670 acres. It houses the largest concentration of federal agencies outside of Washington D.C.

The major agencies at the Federal Center include the Department of the Interior and its Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and the United States Geological Survey. A special facility at the center is the National Ice Core Laboratory.

The Federal Center's focus on sciences brought many highly trained workers from throughout the country to Lakewood in the post-World War II years and had a deep impact on the makeup and diversity of Lakewood. These employees contributed to the high value that Lakewood has placed on education, to the rich diversity of the community, and to the science and technology climate that has emerged and is growing in Lakewood.

ACTION 1: Collaborate with internal city departments and build partnerships with civic agencies to effectively add these themes to the Lakewood Heritage Center.

ACTION 2: Collaborate with the successor to and current owner of the original JCRS buildings, including the Jewish synagogue, to promote awareness of the historical significance of the site. Work with the University of Denver, the current holder of the majority of JCRS artifacts. Partner with the Federal Center to promote awareness of its museum and assess how to best identify and include artifacts and interpretive elements from its history into the Lakewood Heritage Center.

ACTION 3: Broaden exhibitions, programming, and outreach to include these three themes.

ACTION 4: Expand interpretive experiences to include nature and open space-focused exhibitions and experiences to strengthen the relationship with Belmar Park.

GOAL 4. ENHANCE AND EXPAND THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE.

Lakewood residents said providing an engaging, informative and inspiring visitor experience is essential. Participants in the planning process shared many creative ideas that this Master Plan will act upon.

ACTION 1: Reaffirm the Lakewood Heritage Center's commitment to the highest level of customer service and engagement through policies, practices and current technology. Establish the visitor experience as the heart of the Heritage Center.

ACTION 2: Improve interpretive signage throughout the Lakewood Heritage Center to include the history of the buildings, the stories of the people who lived and worked in the buildings and the links between the various interpretive centers. Include interactive displays wherever viable, and incorporate technological tools as opportunities allow.



ACTION 3: Expand education and outreach programming for all ages, including intergenerational programming, hands-on activities, and curriculum based programs. Ensure regular monthly programming.

ACTION 4: Add visitor orientation elements to the Visitor Center, specifically an introductory video that provides an overview and highlights of the site.

ACTION 5: Create public access to Lakewood's history through technology and printed collateral material for the Lakewood Heritage Center.

ACTION 6: Create spaces for young children to informally engage in the Lakewood Heritage Center's mission within the Visitor Center and throughout the Heritage Center grounds. A children's play area was specifically identified as a need by the public. This could take the form of public art installations.

ACTION 7: Expand visitor amenities throughout the Lakewood Heritage Center. (See goal 6)

GOAL 5. SERVE AS THE FOCAL FESTIVAL AREA FOR THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD.

ACTION 1: Continue to assess and refine longstanding events produced by the Heritage Center to ensure safe, engaging and enjoyable gatherings that celebrate and build community.

ACTION 2: Actively engage local heritage and cultural groups to assist with adding seasonal new events that reflect the cultures and heritages of Lakewood.

ACTION 3: Establish a mission driven event strategy that guides decision making for city-produced, partner and potential tenant events.

GOAL 6. ENSURE THE BEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE USE OF THE 15 ACRES THAT MAKE UP LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER, AND OF THE CURRENT AND FUTURE BUILDINGS AND THEIR LOCATIONS.

The Conservation and Preservation (CP) building lacks many elements found in museum collections management facilities, such as direct access to exhibition galleries located in the Visitor Center. There is no permanent education space, such as well-equipped multipurpose classrooms with computers, as is typically found in professional museums.

The need for additional visitor amenities has been noted earlier in this Master Plan. These amenities range from the limited-to-full food service called for in the 1996 Master Plan as well as additional outdoor amenities including restroom facilities close to the amphitheater.

The Colfax Hub is the main thoroughfare through the Heritage Center to the amphitheater but lacks completed lighting, seating, shade and wayfinding to benefit visitors who use it.

ACTION 1: Undertake a comprehensive land use, facility use, infrastructure, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) assessment of the Lakewood Heritage Center.

ACTION 2: Evaluate parking needs and options to determine if there is potential to relocate some or all existing parking and reutilize any of the existing parking area for program needs.

ACTION 3: Evaluate the need and options for connecting the Visitor Center exhibition space and CP building collections to provide quality collections management and exhibition spaces.

ACTION 4: Identify options to add additional exhibition, education, visitor orientation and retail space on site.

ACTION 5: Use high visibility land along South Wadsworth Boulevard to enhance recognition of the site. An electronic marquee should be considered.

ACTION 6: Reassess locations for potential future historic structures along Colfax Hub including Lane's Tavern, Lakewood-Mountair Fire Station, a gas station service bay and future buildings.

ACTION 7: Ensure that all publicly accessed areas of the Lakewood Heritage Center meet ADA accessibility requirements.

ACTION 8: Identify how to best address visitor amenities including restrooms, parking, seating, lighting, wayfinding and a children's play area.

ACTION 9: Assess and upgrade security throughout the Lakewood Heritage Center to meet museum standards. Upgrade technology to support both security standards and the needs of visitors and staff.

ACTION 10: Evaluate and determine best strategies for the on-going care and specific maintenance of historic structures. Ensure National Park Service Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties are utilized.

GOAL 7: BECOME AN ACCESSIBLE RESOURCE FOR HISTORIC INFORMATION RELATED TO LAKEWOOD.



The Lakewood Heritage Center is the city's center for research and information about Lakewood's history. To fully function as such, the public reiterated that the Heritage Center needs to expand its archival research capacity and the ability for residents to fully use the archives. This use may range from providing guidance as to where students and their teachers researching the history of the Lakewood may turn for information, to similarly assisting residents searching for history related to early Lakewood.

The Lakewood Heritage Center can also expand its ability to provide information on historic structures throughout the city, and be a resource for advocating for their preservation.

ACTION 1: Work with the Lakewood Historic Preservation Commission, the City Clerk's Office, Jefferson County Archives, the Lakewood Historical Society, and other entities that collect and maintain archives and oral histories relative to the history of Lakewood to digitize these items and make them available online.

Include an inventory of designated historic structures and endangered historic structures. Evaluate upgrading database capacity to include distance learning modules such as eMuseum.

ACTION 2: Serve as a resource and partner for the care of city-owned historical structures as well as collections stored or housed in off-site facilities.

ACTION 3: Assist residents with researching Lakewood history.

GOAL 8: CREATE A STRONG IDENTITY, BRAND, AND POSITION OF VISIBILITY FOR THE LAKEWOOD HERITAGE CENTER.

"We didn't know you were here!" This comment and variations of it are heard consistently at the Lakewood Heritage Center by staff and volunteers. The Heritage Center is an outdoor history museum and a festival site. Does the name accurately reflect what the Lakewood Heritage Center is? Is it easily understandable to the public?

The Lakewood Heritage Center is promoted through various city and division publications but has no unique publication or on-line resource with Heritage Center museum-specific information.

ACTION 1: Conduct a rebranding of the Lakewood Heritage Center that provides it with a distinctive and unique brand identity that complements, but is separate from, HCA and other city venues. Use the new brand consistently in all marketing communications.

ACTION 2: Develop high visibility signage on South Wadsworth Boulevard with information on hours, educational programming, exhibitions, and special events.

ACTION 3: Develop a new website for the Lakewood Heritage Center that is linked to, but distinct from, the city, providing access portals for residents, students and educators.

ACTION 4: Update signage throughout the Lakewood Heritage Center based on new branding.

GOAL 9. ADVANCE AND SUSTAIN THE MUSEUM THROUGH NEW FUNDING SOURCES.

The Lakewood Heritage Center generates revenue for the City of Lakewood through ticketed events, admission-based programming, rentals, and museum store sales. The Heritage Center is also eligible to receive Tier II support from Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) funds due to the audience it reaches each year through these events and programs. In addition, the Heritage Center routinely seeks grant support to match city funds for restoration needs.

ACTION 1: Pursue funding from local, state and federal agencies.

ACTION 2: Expand earned income through strategies such as competitive pricing, additional admission-based programming, expanded rental opportunities and merchandise sales.

ACTION 3: Evaluate a dedicated funding stream such as a percentage of ticket revenue that can be used for specific expenses such as conservation and preservation, paying down capital investments, maintenance or building restoration costs.

ACTION 4: Evaluate establishing a Friends group under the 501(c)(3) HCA Alliance umbrella that is focused exclusively on the Heritage Center, to raise funds, to increase public awareness and to serve as a pass-through for the receipt of grants that require a nonprofit partner with the city. Note, a Friends group is a group of volunteers who raise funds and advocate for the center.

GOAL 10. UTILIZE NATIONAL STANDARDS AND BEST PRACTICES IN THE CARE AND PRESENTATION OF THE LAKEWOOD COMMUNITY'S COLLECTION AND HISTORY.

It is important that the Lakewood Heritage Center strives to operate according to national standards and best practices to the best of its abilities and in accordance with its resources. The Heritage Center does this through its commitment to, and demonstration of, the professional standards for education, public service and collections care to ensure excellence in the care and preservation of items held by the Heritage Center in the public's trust.



ACTION 1: Research national standards and best practices and establish annual goals and benchmarks for areas of focus. Work toward strengthening all policies and procedures, and infrastructure requirements.

ACTION 2: Address needs for added staffing capacity to accomplish national standards and best practices.











PHASING THE MASTER PLAN

PHASE 1: 2017-2020

- Complete a comprehensive site plan including ADA accessibility, and an infrastructure study to ensure best future use of the entire 15 acres. Incorporate outcomes into the Lakewood Heritage Center's Master Plan and actions steps into the Heritage Center's Strategic Plan.
- Conduct a branding study and develop a new logo, image, and related collateral for the Lakewood Heritage Center.
- Use this effort as the foundation for a new, dynamic and interactive website and new signage on Wadsworth Boulevard.



- Begin work on a new "visitor experience" entrance to the Visitor Center, including video and information kiosks.
- Identify opportunities for greater visibility of the store and substantially increase sales.
- Establish task force groups for the fire station and Car No. 25 projects and conduct fundraising efforts.
- Install a new permanent exhibition and establish a timetable of rotating exhibitions at the Visitor Center that incorporate the additional stories and themes addressed in this Master Plan.
- Establish a timeline for digitizing the Lakewood Heritage Center collection for public online access through collaborative work with appropriate partners. Explore funding opportunities to support this endeavor.
- Identify interpretive signage needs throughout the site, including the addition of new focus areas such as nature/open-space based programming. Seek grant funding.
- Expand programming through the addition of adult and student learning experiences and enhanced community events.
- Establish a timeline and funding plan for restoration projects currently in process:
 - Peerless Gas Station
 - Caretaker's Cottage Phase 2 and 3
 - Calving Barn
- Work with partners to expand an oral history program.
- Launch a Lakewood Heritage Center-specific Friends organization to invest community members in the growth and success of the museum and to raise funds for specific activities.
- Assess and update core policies to reflect national standards and best practices for professional museums.



PHASE 2: 2021-2024

- Identify a timeline and funding to construct the structures and improvements identified in the revised site plan.
- Upgrade security and technology systems throughout the Lakewood Heritage Center.
- Identify a timeline and funding to construct a historically accurate Lane's Tavern or interpretive element as a part of the Colfax Hub.
- Install new interpretive signage throughout the Heritage Center, together with the launch of interactive visitor technology.



Photo credit: Children's Museum of Denver at Marsico Campus

- Complete a new "visitor experience" entrance to the Visitor Center, including a children's/family learning area.
- As programming and attendance grows, assess the need for establishing a food service venue for the site.
- Assess and update infrastructure to reflect national standards and best practices for professional museums.

PHASE 3: 2025-2027

- Complete all added buildings and the full restoration of the historical buildings at the Lakewood Heritage Center.
- Launch expanded indoor and outdoor exhibition program. This may include traveling/loaned exhibits from entities such as the Smithsonian.
- Assess and update core policies to reflect national standards and best practices for professional museums.



CONCLUSION

With much gratitude for the input from hundreds of Lakewood residents and the Lakewood Heritage Center visitors, the 2017-2027 Master Plan builds on the original 1996 plan that established the Heritage Center as a 20th century museum and provides the framework for the center's success over the next decade.

The center is a living "jewel" that will continue to grow and improve the user experience with new and enhanced structures, exhibits, infrastructure, programming and activities as outlined in this plan. The Lakewood Heritage Center will continue to be the primary custodian of the city's rich and vibrant history.

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