



# Looking@Lakewood

## Outdoor Water Conservation Incentive Program returns

### 2024 Water Conservation Impact



Last year, Lakewood resident Meghan Teegarden decided to take advantage of the city's outdoor water conservation incentive program and replace the grass in her front yard with discounted low-water landscaping kits.

"We used Garden in a Box two years ago and wanted to convert more of our lawn to native and drought-tolerant plants. My kids and I love the long-lasting flowers and enjoy observing the pollinators that the plants attract," she said. "We've had many different types of bees, butterflies and hummingbirds visiting our yard."

Teegarden completed the project last fall and expects to conserve water and lower her water bill beginning this year.

"Applying for the program and picking up the plants was a straightforward process. It was a bit more work to plant everything, but we are excited to see the plants emerge this coming spring."



Lakewood resident Meghan Teegarden's turf replacement.

Rather than mowing our lawn we will be hunting for beneficial insects!" said Teegarden.

Teegarden and many other Lakewood residents participated in the 2024 program, which produced impressive numbers (see graphic).

Help make the numbers impressive for the 2025 program, which is the third year for the city's Outdoor Water Conservation Program. Sign up for this year's program, which includes the following services and discounts:

- **Discount Garden in a Box kits:** Receive a \$25 discount on a set of low-water native landscape plants professionally designed for Colorado yards. A discount of \$100 is available for income-qualified households.
- **Lawn replacement:** Commit to removing at least 200 square feet of lawn and replacing it with low-water landscaping; participants can get up to a \$750 discount toward lawn removal services or receive up to four free Garden in a Box kits for DIY removals.

- **Free sprinkler evaluations:** Receive a free assessment from a landscape professional who will help optimize sprinkler and irrigation systems to maximize efficiency and save water.

Visit [Lakewood.org/OutdoorWater](http://Lakewood.org/OutdoorWater) for full program details and enrollment information. The incentive program is managed by the city's partner, Resource Central ([ResourceCentral.org](http://ResourceCentral.org)), a local nonprofit focused on water and energy conservation and waste reduction. Quantities of each service are extremely limited, so enroll quickly.

This program supports the Lakewood Community Sustainability, Climate, and Zero Waste Division's goal of reducing citywide water consumption. Around 50 percent of home water usage goes to watering landscapes.

"Water is in high demand in Colorado, and conserving it as much as possible is critically important," said Jeff Wong, manager for Lakewood's water conservation efforts. "We believe that offering these programs to residents really helps them take control of how much water they use."

The division has also created a Residential Outdoor Water Resource Guide to help educate community members on how they can create a beautiful Colorado landscape while also reducing water use. The guide is available in English and Spanish at [Lakewood.org/OutdoorWater](http://Lakewood.org/OutdoorWater).

This program is supported by two grants from the Colorado Water Conservation Board, including the state's Turf Replacement Program. For any questions, please contact us at [sustainability@lakewood.org](mailto:sustainability@lakewood.org).



Lakewood residents love the city's parks, and our numbers show that. Visit Parks by the Numbers on page 7.

## Help envision Lakewood's future

It's time for an important discussion about the future of your city, and we want you to participate.

The city will be discussing updating its Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Code during a series of meetings this spring and summer following two years of work and community engagement. The Comprehensive Plan is an important advisory document for the community because it is used to inform decisions on housing, transportation, sustainability, parks and more for the next 15 years. It allows you as residents to set the vision for what you want the city to become. The Zoning Code executes that vision as a regulatory document.

The city is conducting both updates together to align the zoning updates with the vision set in the Comprehensive Plan.

It will also be a better use of the extensive community engagement to shape both of these updates.

Thousands of you have helped draft and review updates, and thank you to those who have participated by sharing your stories and perspectives and providing specific feedback

through surveys, subscribing to the newsletter, attending events and more. More than 2,000 of your responses provided 92,000 words of feedback in a survey. Staff has had over 800 conversations with residents at events and meetings, and more than 13,600 visits have occurred to the Comprehensive Plan update website. In addition, City Council appointed your fellow residents to three advisory groups that spent an estimated 1,000 volunteer hours reviewing materials and providing feedback.

The initial draft of the Comprehensive Plan elements are available at [Lakewood.org/EnvisionLakewood2040](http://Lakewood.org/EnvisionLakewood2040). Information on the zoning updates is available at [LakewoodTogether.org/ZoningUpdates](http://LakewoodTogether.org/ZoningUpdates).

### SPECIAL ELECTION VOTERS' GUIDE

Residents who live in Ward 3 and 4 will be voting to fill vacant City Council seats in their wards in the **March 25 special election**.

*Read what the candidates have to say on pages 4-5.*

See **ZONING** page 8

PRSR STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
CHEYENNE, WY  
PERMIT NO. 340

POSTAL PATRON

## MAYOR



Wendi Strom

Did you know that Lakewood has a Comprehensive Plan?

In fact, it has been eye-opening for me since serving as a council member and now as your mayor to learn how **so much** of the work that the city does is driven by in-depth studies and plans. The Comprehensive Plan is the big one. This plan is the vision document for how we move forward on working to meet the evolving wants and needs of our residents and other stakeholders. Because the Comprehensive Plan drives so much of the decision-making process for the next decade and more, it

begins with extensive community engagement, consultant support, staff input and feedback from both the Planning Commission and Lakewood City Council. This is the work that has been going on now for the last two years.

In January 2024, the public process launched with the Vision and Value Survey, and postcards about the survey were mailed to every address in Lakewood. That's approximately 85,000 addresses. That survey started the engagement process by casting a wide net to as many of our community members as possible with the goal of making sure that the feedback received represents the very diverse needs of our Lakewood community members. In addition to these postcards, Lakewood staff has worked hard over the last two years, attending many community meetings, open houses and other pop-up events in person to meet residents where they are and to learn more about what they would like to see.

A February staff memo provided to the Planning Commission highlights that over 800 conversations occurred with community members at these events. Beyond the outreach

done by city staff, City Council, including me and some of our community partners, have also worked to get as much feedback from our community members as possible. Opportunities have been available online and in non-English languages as well. Overall, it has been exciting to see how many of you, our Lakewood residents, have been engaged in this process.

**Thank you to each and every one of you** who has spent time either responding through our website, which has received more than 13,600 visits, replying to e-mail messages, working on our advisory groups and joining community meetings to make sure that what the City Council receives this spring is really truly a reflection of your needs across our city.

**What's new with the Comprehensive Plan in 2025** is that it will be closely entwined with the next needed zoning update. The zoning updates have always been "informed by" the Comprehensive Plan (What the plan "says, zoning then "does"), but they have not been done simultaneously. This year, that's different.

In an effort to more quickly align the zoning update with the Comprehensive Plan (and all the

community engagement that was received as part of it), the zoning update process has been merged with the Comprehensive Plan update. I appreciate that staff saw a way to increase efficiency and better utilize the last two years of community feedback that's been received. This new process means that by this summer, we are looking at both being updated.

If you're interested in submitting feedback for any of these updates, I encourage you to watch the schedules coming up for both the Planning Commission and City Council. These conversations will begin with City Council on March 17 at a Study Session, followed by public hearings in May and June. Visit [Lakewood.org/EnvisionLakewood2040](http://Lakewood.org/EnvisionLakewood2040) or [LakewoodTogether.org/ZoningUpdates](http://LakewoodTogether.org/ZoningUpdates).

I am very much looking forward to rolling up our sleeves and diving in on the work to finalize these updates. This work is a critical tool for the City Council to use and will guide us on how you, our residents, and other stakeholders envision the next 15 years.

**Wendi Strom**  
303-987-7040  
[wstrom@Lakewood.org](mailto:wstrom@Lakewood.org)

## WARD 4



Dave Rein

As I write this, I've finished shoveling a foot of snow, and our city's unsung heroes have been working through the night to plow our streets. Tomorrow, the forecast is for sunny skies and 50 degrees. Never a dull moment.

While our thoughts may be about snow and an eagerness for spring, we should now have ballots in our mailboxes for the special election in Ward 4 to replace Council member Rich Olver who moved to Arizona. A simple

list of four names appears on the ballots. But our ballot really asks a difficult question: "Who among the candidates aligns with your vision of how the city moves forward and who can get things done?" We have little time to decide who deserves our vote.

As quickly as snow melts under the Colorado sun, time will evaporate, and we will be standing before the March 25 deadline to drop our ballot or vote in person. Please take the time now to learn about the candidates and vote (see the candidates' answers to a questionnaire on pages 4-5). We will be leaning on him or her to make enormous decisions soon after the election.

In April, the Planning Commission will hold hearings on the city's Comprehensive Plan. The plan is a long-term blueprint of the vision for Lakewood and is the result of two years of our neighbors talking to each other and to our city. I am immensely grateful to all of you who helped sketch the city's blueprint, and I am equally anxious to see the blueprint unfurled.

In May, the City Council will be asked to vote on the plan, and

before the seasons change yet again, we will likely be asked to put the plan into action by changing the zoning code. There are no motivational speakers exciting crowds into studying the Zoning Code, and yet it will help shape the character of our neighborhoods; our parks; whether we make room for our teachers, nurses, and first responders so they may also share the American Dream; it helps attract small and local businesses; and so much more.

Which candidate do we trust to study this dense technical material, to listen to all voices, and find workable solutions? Does civility matter to each candidate?

It is unfair to ask us to learn about the candidates so quickly at such an important time, but I know we are a motivated community and one that loves our city. When spring arrives, we will be ready, and we will vote.

Talking of spring, I invite you to consider a couple of popular programs that might help your spring planting plans. The first is the city's Tree Sale in which you can buy a variety of trees, and the second is Garden in a Box in which you can buy a low-water

garden kit. Both are sold at the discounted price of \$25 (see information on the front page or visit [Lakewood.org/TreeSale](http://Lakewood.org/TreeSale)).

That was a lot of information, but there is never a dull moment. Thank you for working with me to make Lakewood a better place for everyone.

**Dave Rein**  
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**City Manager**  
Kathy Hodgson

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# Supporting businesses to foster a thriving city



Lakewood's Economic Development Office is committed to supporting the community and businesses through every stage of growth. From helping new businesses establish a strong foundation to offering ongoing support for retention, expansion, and development projects, our team can provide valuable resources. Businesses can access grant opportunities, networking events, and guidance on navigating permitting, zoning, and incentives. Through various initiatives, we aim to foster a thriving Lakewood community.

## Business assistance

The city is committed to fostering a flourishing business community by offering comprehensive support for businesses at every stage of growth:

- **Business attraction:** Site selection assistance, market data, and incentives to help new businesses establish a strong foundation.
- **Retention and expansion:** Ongoing support through workforce development programs, operational guidance, and connections to funding opportunities.
- **Growth resources:** Access to grant opportunities, networking events, and collaboration with local and regional partners.

Contact us to explore tailored solutions for your business needs.



These grants can help business and property owners further invest in their properties, overcome barriers to the redevelopment of vacant buildings, and create or update safety features. Apply online today at [Lakewood.org/EconomicDevelopment](http://Lakewood.org/EconomicDevelopment).

## Lunch and Chats

Lunch and Chat events with our team occur throughout the year. These industry-specific sessions feature an educational component and offer a chance for the city to gather feedback from business owners about the challenges they face in Lakewood. The sign-up form is available online at [Lakewood.org/EconomicDevelopment](http://Lakewood.org/EconomicDevelopment).

## Schedule (Lunch, 12-1:30 p.m.):

- April 10 – Beverage industry
- May 6 – Small business
- Sept. 3 – Woman-owned business
- Oct. 1 – Commercial real estate
- Nov. 5 – Nonprofit

## Marketing

We provide tailored resources and guidance to increase visibility, foster growth, and spotlight businesses:

- **E-newsletter:** Monthly publication that provides valuable updates regarding our local business community.
- **Partnership:** Collaboration with local and regional business associations for promotional opportunities.
- **Grand openings:** Coordination of free grand openings.
- **Social media campaigns**
  - » **Business Feature Friday:** Monthly video feature of a local business on our social media platforms.
  - » **#ShopLakewood:** Help us celebrate different occasions by inviting our residents to shop locally at your Lakewood small business! The #ShopLakewood campaign is designed to inspire residents to explore local businesses, where people of all ages can enjoy fun experiences and make lasting memories. Submit your business to be featured in the campaign at [Lakewood.org/shoplakewood](http://Lakewood.org/shoplakewood).

You can reach out to [ed@lakewood.org](mailto:ed@lakewood.org) or visit [Lakewood.org/EconomicDevelopment](http://Lakewood.org/EconomicDevelopment) for more information.

## Development navigation

Whether you're planning a commercial, mixed-use, or another kind of project, we offer personalized support to streamline your development process and bring your vision to life:

- **Site selection assistance:** Access to market data, property listings, and insights to identify prime locations.
- **Permitting guidance:** Expert navigation through local regulations, permitting processes, and zoning requirements.
- **Incentive programs:** Connection to grants, tax incentives, and public-private partnership opportunities.
- **Community insights:** Local market information to align your development with community needs and priorities.
- **Development Highlights Map:** Find the most up-to-date information on all development projects in Lakewood at [Lakewood.org/DevelopmentHighlightsMap](http://Lakewood.org/DevelopmentHighlightsMap).

## Grant programs

We offer three different grant programs, with 50/50 matching funds up to \$10,000:

- **Commercial Reinvestment:** Encouraging business and property owners to make improvements that positively affect the community.
- **Adaptive Reuse:** Funding to help business owners overcome barriers in the redevelopment of vacant buildings.
- **Business Safety and Security:** Helping business owners create or update safety features for their properties.

# CYBERSECURITY FOR TAX SEASON: Protect your identity and refund

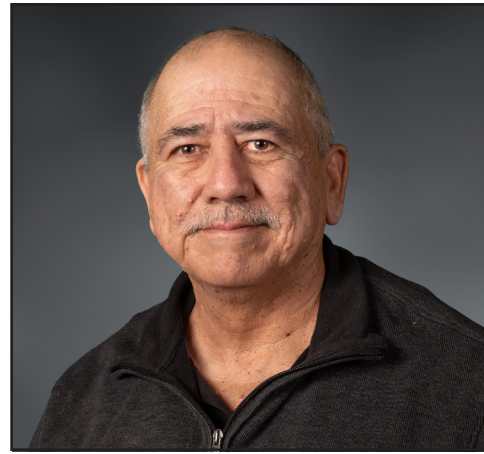
Tax season is stressful enough without scammers. Criminals ramp up attacks, impersonating the Internal Revenue Services or services like H&R Block and TurboTax. Protect yourself with these tips.



1. **File early:** Reduces the risk of criminals filing fraudulent returns using your stolen information.
2. **IRS IP PIN:** Get an Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN) at [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov) and search for "PIN." This six-digit code prevents unauthorized filings using your Social Security number.
3. **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):** Use MFA on all tax-related accounts (IRS, tax software, banks).
4. **Beware of scams:** Be wary of emails or calls requesting sensitive information. Don't click suspicious links. The IRS never initiates contact this way.
5. **Secure document sharing:** Use encrypted email or a secure file-sharing portal for tax documents. For mail, use a tracked courier service.
6. **Report scams:** Report suspected scams to the IRS.
  - » Identity Theft: [IRS.gov/identity-theft-central](http://IRS.gov/identity-theft-central)
  - » IRS impersonation: [Tigta.gov](http://Tigta.gov)
  - » Phishing/online scams: [IRSgov/privacy-disclosure/report-phishing](http://IRSgov/privacy-disclosure/report-phishing)
7. **Stay vigilant this tax season:** Don't let cybercriminals steal your identity or refund!



# CITY OF LAKEWOOD • COUNCIL SEAT CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRES



## Ward 3 Pedro "Pete" Roybal

**Occupation:** Retired  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** Peteroybal@gmail.com  
**Your website/social media:** Peteroybal2025.com

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

My intent is to serve as the eyes and ears of Ward 3; to be an advocate for change based on the expressed needs of the people; to work with City officials in maintaining City service standards for elements such as street maintenance, water access, and safety as these considerations are especially critical during this period of remarkable growth; and to honor and celebrate the traditions and customs that make Lakewood a great place to live, work, and play.

I am asking for your support in the interim election in March and again in November of 2025.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

I have prior experience serving on the Lakewood City Council (2011-2019). Ongoing education is important, and I have completed nine Citizens Community Education courses: DEA Citizens Course (2018); Commission on Cultural Diversity and Human Relations (3/2004 – 1/2008); Civics 101 Academy (Class of 01/2008), (Class of 12/2006); Citizens' Planning Academy (Fall, 2006); Jefferson County Sheriff's Citizens' Academy (2005); Citizens Planning Academy for Lakewood Hispanic Community (2003); West Metro Fire Rescue, Second Citizens Fire Academy (2003-1); Lakewood Police Citizen Police Academy (2002).

I have an above-average understanding of how local government works. Additionally, I served in the U.S. Army for 20 years; I was later self-employed (Facility Maintenance) for 24 years.

**3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

I will do my due diligence, including background research and a compilation of findings, before reporting/listening to the Ward 3 citizens of Lakewood whom I represent.



## Ward 3 Patrick Flaherty

**Occupation:** Remodeler/contractor  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** Phone- 720-331-9266, email- patrick@votepatflaherty.com  
**Your website/social media:** Votepatflaherty.com

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

I'm running in this election because many of my neighbors in Lakewood feel disenfranchised and I was asked to consider this seat to represent them. I have no idea what I will do for the election in November, this race is going to be the determination. Win- I'm going to have to be able to help people in this short term in order to run. Lose- I'll see if I feel I represented myself honestly and if people still want me to run.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

My experience in Lakewood is pretty typical to most families. I go to work, raise my kids, try to be a good spouse, and try to find a little time for my neighbors. As I've chosen to raise my family here I need a safe, healthy, walkable/bikeable community. I know how hard it can be to pay bills and feed a family - so I need affordable housing. I know what it's like to struggle with bureaucracies with no effect. I will have to transition out of my current job into one with less time demands to properly serve the people of Lakewood should I win, so I need a strong job market. We have a good number of council members who "fight" for these things for "you", I'll be fighting for us.

**3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

I would approach it just as I'm approaching them now, with open dialogue and with as open a mind as I possibly can. Our most divisive issue right now in ward 3 is the Kairoi development off belmar park. I've reached out to the city, to the developer, and to members of Save Open Spaces. I've talked with members of the community about their opinions. I still think there's a way to get compromise on this thing and I'm trying with this approach. The job of the council goes beyond committees and votes. Right now I think we have an approach to talk with individuals that agree with the views already held, that's not the job of an effective public servant. To be effective you must discuss and hear from any side of the issue to fully understand what's at stake and the consequences your vote. Everyone is trying their best for themselves, their family, and their community. That can't be forgotten.



## Ward 3 Ken Cruz

**Occupation:** CEO of Mile High Creative | Co-Founder of Vrtrum & Community Advocate  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** info@cruzforlakewood.com  
**Your website/social media:** <https://www.cruzforlakewood.com>

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

Lakewood is at a crossroads, and Ward 3 deserves a leader who will listen, collaborate, and advocate for real solutions. I'm running because I believe in responsible growth, stronger support for small businesses, and a city that works for everyone, not just a select few. My commitment to service and community comes from my Abuelito (grandfather), who taught me that leadership means showing up, working hard, and building something that lasts. He believed in lifting up those around him, a lesson that continues to guide me today.

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to those who have much, but whether we provide enough for those who have little." This aligns with my approach to leadership: progress isn't just about change, it's about ensuring that change is intentional, equitable, and benefits the entire community. As a small business owner, former real estate professional, and community leader, I've seen firsthand how city policies impact working families, homeowners, and entrepreneurs. Yes, I plan to run in November to fill this seat permanently. This isn't about temporary solutions, it's about progress with purpose and ensuring Lakewood's future is shaped by the people who call it home.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

I bring a solutions-driven approach rooted in business, housing, and community leadership: Champion for Small Businesses: As CEO of Mile High Creatives and Co-Founder of Vrtrum, I've worked with local businesses to navigate city regulations, grow their customer base, and strengthen economic opportunities. I understand what it takes to cut red tape and make Lakewood business-friendly. Housing & Development Expertise: As a former real estate professional, I understand the barriers that make housing unaffordable for many families. I will advocate for balanced growth, ensuring new development respects Lakewood's parks and open spaces while keeping housing accessible.

(Continued — See Cruz on page 8.)



## Ward 4 William (Bill) Furman

**Occupation:** Architect/Project Manager - Jacobs  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** BillFurman@BillFurman4Lakewood.com  
**Your website/social media:** [BillFurman4Lakewood.com](https://www.facebook.com/billfurman4lakewood)  
<https://www.facebook.com/billfurman4lakewood>

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

Housing affordability and preserving our parks and open space is a dual mission for me. Fueling a vibrant economy through the support of our small businesses and attracting new business is critical for Lakewood's future prosperity. Parks define much of our unique quality of life in Lakewood, and businesses survive and are attracted to communities that have housing their staff can afford.

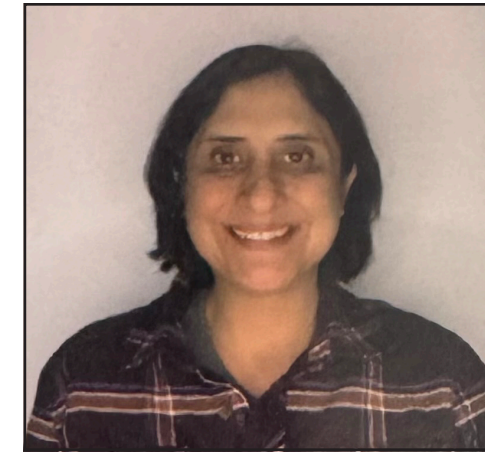
As an Architect I spend my days solving problems and working on projects that will take years to come to fruition. I work in public architecture, leading teams that design higher education buildings, water, civic and aviation projects. This work is about resilience, value and longevity. We should be pursuing smart growth that will help Lakewood thrive well into the future, while protecting our quality of life. My opponent in 2017 did not run for a second term, his successor then prematurely vacated his seat without finishing his first term. I will seek the seat now and in November with a commitment to seeing that the work we start as a community is completed with the best outcome for all of us.

Providing opportunities for people to live and work in Lakewood, with access to transit, would foster healthy sales tax-based services like the police, parks and rec, and resources for cultural institutions. Building homes where people work and near transit eases the traffic congestion and environmental impacts of those that would otherwise commute into the city.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

I was born and raised in Lakewood, and have known this community going on 50 years. My parents still live here as does one of my sisters. From delivering the sentinel in the 80s to raising my children here now I have been part of this community my whole life. I am dedicated to the health and vibrancy of this city. I have demonstrated that by giving my time to serve on the Board of Appeals and the Planning Commission, as well as numerous advisory committees. I am involved in professional organizations dedicated to the health and success of our state, the AIA Government Affairs Committee and the Colorado Business Roundtable.

(Continued — See Furman on page 8.)



## Ward 4 Desirée González

**Occupation:** Intelligence Consultant, Musician, Videographer  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** email : [GonzalezForLakewood@proton.me](mailto:GonzalezForLakewood@proton.me) or text whatsapp 303-941-5456  
**Your website/social media:** Facebook Page: Councilwoman At-large Desirée González

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

I am tired of the corruption, hidden agendas and a city that actively works against its own citizens. Enough is enough, it's time for real lasting positive change. I would also like the opportunity to address local issues, improve public services, and create positive changes in areas like education, public safety, housing and the environment. I would like to amplify voices for our marginalized underserved communities and ensure that everyone has fair representation. I feel an obligation of civic duty to contribute to my community's well-being and to make decisions that benefit the common good. I look forward to working with a diverse group of people to help navigate complex challenges while building a public service career. I am running because I value community connections and I would like to strengthen the relationship between residents and local government, working to create a more transparent, engaged and participatory community. I no doubt have fresh perspectives on topics like social justice and environmental sustainability. I am also familiar with issues facing parents today when it comes to our schools and the intense challenges it can bring. I absolutely plan to run in November as well.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

I have a unique background that helps me sort through the chaos and understand things are not always what they appear to be. I have strong local political connections associated with participation in an insulated group of honor students during my primary education. My leadership skills were honed early as I participated in a national competitive champion softball team. Including Junior Olympics, which afforded me travel and distinctive experiences. Green Mountain has raised many amazing people who I am lucky enough to have known my entire life. I have an uncanny ability to connect with all walks of life related to touring the continent for the last 25 years as a professional musician as well as a former thriving small business owner and entrepreneur. I'm a good listener and able to articulate my ideas clearly to foster positive relationships and to build trust within the community. Transparency is paramount in building trust and eliminating misinformation. I would like to focus on solutions instead of getting bogged down by controversy.

(Continued — See González on page 8.)



## Ward 4 Diane Rhodes

**Occupation:** Computer Science Faculty  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** info@Rhodes4Lakewood.com  
**Your website/social media:** <https://Rhodes4Lakewood.com> and X handle @CSProfessor1

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

I'm running in the special election because I believe Ward 4 and Lakewood need balanced representation on the City Council. Our community faces important decisions that will impact our neighborhoods, and I want to ensure we have thoughtful, measured leadership that considers all perspectives when making these choices. As for November's general election - I'm currently focused on serving Ward 4's immediate needs through this special election. I believe in taking one election at a time and giving my full attention to the current responsibilities before making decisions about future races.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

My career in technology and education has equipped me with valuable skills for serving on City Council. As an IT professional who now leads computing faculty across Colorado's Community College system, I understand both the analytical side of complex problem-solving and the human side of bringing diverse groups together to achieve common goals. My doctorate in Educational Leadership has deepened my understanding of how to build consensus and guide meaningful change. I practice exemplary leadership principles as developed by Kouzes and Posner, which emphasize modeling the way, inspiring shared vision, challenging processes to find better solutions, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. These principles would guide my approach to serving Ward 4 - ensuring all voices are heard, decisions are well-researched, and our community's needs are met through collaborative, thoughtful leadership.

**3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

My approach to any policy issue - controversial or not - remains consistent: thoughtful analysis, careful consideration of all perspectives, and most importantly, listening to my constituents. I believe good governance comes from understanding how policies affect our community members' daily lives, gathering comprehensive input, and making informed decisions based on both data and community feedback.



## Ward 4 Nicholas Michael Munden

**Occupation:** Safety Coordinator and Certified Electrician  
**Best way for voters to contact you:** Phone 303-359-7613 email campaign manager jennifernoah@progress4all.com  
**Your website/social media:** [www.progress4all.com](http://www.progress4all.com)

**1) Why are you interested in filling this vacant council seat and do you plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently?**

I am interested in creating a lasting positive change in my community and the lives of those that live in it. I plan to run in November to fill the seat permanently. If elected I hope to achieve lasting progress for our community, by fostering vested community connections through community members, leaders, students, city workers, business owners, and state officials.

**2) What about your background and experience would make you an effective council member?**

My background is unique and full of learning opportunities that have helped to shape the person I am today and will lead me to become an effective council member. Because of my struggles with addiction, I have fostered connections with marginalized communities. These communities have helped me to learn about myself and others and the problems that we face and to overcome them. I believe that utilizing these experiences and connections will help with some the main issues affecting our community such as homelessness, incarceration, and open drug use. With my work history as an electrician, I am a certified Residential wireman and safety coordinator. I have worked on large projects such as the VA hospital where I served on the Safety Committee, St Joseph's Hospital, and the OPTV building, as well as smaller residential projects. My employment experience provides me considerable insight when it comes to infrastructure and development, which is key to becoming an effective council member.

**3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

I would approach controversial policy issues with an open mind and by becoming as educated on the policies as possible, first and foremost. I would then educate my constituents as well, as well as gathering their insights and opinions. I would then bring their concerns and insights to fellow city council members and various advisory committees for further discussion.

# ACTIVE ADULT RESOURCE FAIR

## Calling all active adults: check out the wellness fair

We are working hard to help older adults stay active, and our Active Adult Resource Fair this spring will support those of you age 55 and older. Whether you're seeking information on health care, housing options, recreational activities or support services, this fair offers valuable resources to help you thrive.

Happening during Older Americans Month in May, this fair will be 8:30 a.m.-noon May 9 at the Charles Whitlock Recreation Center, 1555 Dover St. With more than 75 vendors, you'll have plenty to explore. Try out demonstration fitness classes, get your blood pressure and balance checked and pick up giveaways. As always, this event is free, and no registration is necessary.

"May is Older Americans Month, and here in Lakewood we take pride in the multitude of resources and wellness opportunities available for active adults," said Traci Wieland, the new director of the Community Resources Department. "We hope you will join us to learn more at the Active Adult Resource Fair."

Looking for health and wellness advice? We've got you covered. Access valuable information on physical and mental health, medical services, insurance options and wellness programs designed for older adults.

More interested in looking into housing? We've got you covered there as well. Learn about housing solutions including independent living, senior communities and home

modification services to enhance your quality of life.

You'll also be able to get connected with organizations offering legal, financial and emotional support services specifically tailored for seniors and their families.

Naturally, recreational opportunities abound here in Lakewood, and this event will highlight a range of recreation, travel experiences and hobby programs designed to keep you active and engaged.

You'll also be able to meet with community leaders, specialists and peers to learn about available resources and support.

More details will be available as the fair approaches at [Lakewood.org/ResourceFair](http://Lakewood.org/ResourceFair).

CITY OF LAKEWOOD PARKS DEPARTMENT

## Help Wanted PARKS JOBS

18+

Learn about rewarding positions supporting Lakewood parks.

**SEASONAL/VARIABLE JOBS**

- Arborist or Forestry
- Parks Maintenance
- Greenhouse and Horticulture

Scan the QR code to view listings and apply.

[Lakewood.org/Parks](http://Lakewood.org/Parks) SCAN ME





The Neighborhood Participation Program funded this labyrinth at Chester-Portsmouth Park in 2020.

### Neighborhood Support

## Apply now for up to \$60,000 for a project in your neighborhood

If your neighborhood needs a new small park amenity, community garden, public art or a similar improvement, apply for a grant from Lakewood's 2025 Neighborhood Participation Program.

For more than 25 years, the city's NPP program has offered an outstanding opportunity for neighborhoods to come together to make a difference. This year's application process requires two steps. The first is a preapplication that is now available online and must be submitted by 5 p.m. on May 1. If the project is eligible, the applicant will be provided with the final application that is due by 5 p.m. on July 1. More information about the requirements are available at [Lakewood.org/NPP](http://Lakewood.org/NPP).

Grants of up to \$60,000 are available for a project, with a total of \$160,000 to be awarded in 2025. For a project to be eligible, it must have a general benefit to the neighborhood, be located on public property and come from groups representing the neighborhood.

Project proposals compete directly with other proposals and are evaluated based on criteria including health and safety, neighborhood support, maintenance requirements and support for the goals of citywide plans such as

Lakewood's Comprehensive Plan. Lakewood City Council makes the final selection of the projects to receive grants.



### APPLY FOR THE 2025 PAINT-A-THON!

#### YOU QUALIFY IF:

- You are 60 years of age or older, are physically disabled, or both.
- You own and occupy your own home.
- You are on a limited income and cannot afford a painting contractor.
- You plan to live in your home for the next two years.
- Your home is less than 20 feet in height.



**APPLY NOW**  
720-301-4992  
[brothersredevelopment.org](http://brothersredevelopment.org)

## Do you know whether you live in a flood hazard area?

As springtime approaches with rain and thunderstorms, it can serve as a reminder that some Lakewood properties lie in flood hazard areas even though they don't normally appear to be in danger. Flooding can happen in high, medium or low risk flood areas.

To understand your property's flooding risk, call 303-987-7500 or submit a request for this free service to Lakewood's Public Works Department at [Lakewood.org/FloodPlainRequest](http://Lakewood.org/FloodPlainRequest). You can also write to the department or visit in person at 470 S. Allison Parkway. Public Works staff members are also available to visit your property to discuss potential flood hazards.

Public Works can provide you with detailed flood plain information including Federal Emergency Management Agency flood insurance rate maps and studies, local community flood hazard area study maps, flood depth data, elevation certificates, landslide hazards, historic flood events and the location of designated wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory.

Learn about your flood risk and other National Flood Insurance Program resources online at [FloodSmart.gov](http://FloodSmart.gov).

### Tips for living in or near a flood hazard area

#### Insure your property

- Check to see if you have a current flood insurance policy for your property. Flood insurance is recommended for everyone because standard homeowners' and renters' insurance policies do not cover flood losses. Property owners can insure their buildings and contents, and renters can insure only their contents. There is a 30-day waiting period before policies become effective, so plan ahead.

- Lakewood is part of a federal program that provides discounted flood insurance premiums for any property owner in the city whether or not the building is in a flood hazard area. For flood insurance and premium details, contact your insurance agent. To search for an agent by your ZIP code, contact the National Flood Insurance Program at 877-336-2627 or [FloodSmart.gov](http://FloodSmart.gov).

#### Protect your property

- Analyze the slope of the ground around your foundation. Check to see that water drains away from your foundation a minimum of 7-10 feet on all sides.
- Check your gutters and downspouts to see that they drain away from your foundation. Use splash blocks as necessary. Make sure that your downspouts do not drain toward your neighbor's foundation. Remember, standing water in your yard can seep into a basement.
- Help keep drainageways clean so they can carry flood flows. Do not dump or throw debris into gulches, ditches or streams, including branches, grass clippings, garbage, dirt and concrete. Debris can accumulate and block drainageways and increase flooding hazards, and it is against city law to dump debris in drainageways.
- Report dumping in gulches, ditches or streams and potential problems such as blocked culverts to the Public Works Department at 303-987-7500.

#### Protect yourself and others from flood hazards

- During heavy rainfall, stay alert for warning signals (sirens, television, radio, websites, and social media). Evacuate if directed.
- Plan evacuation routes to move to higher ground if necessary.
- Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and 2 feet of water can sweep away your vehicle.
- Prepare, plan and stay informed. Visit [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov).

#### Build responsibly

- Always check with Lakewood Public Works at 303-987-7500 to ask about development requirements before you build, remodel, fence, regrade, fill or otherwise alter your property. All development within the flood plain requires a special permit from the city.

#### Protect natural flood plain functions

- Urban drainageways function as conveyance systems for storm runoff and flood events. Help keep Lakewood's gulches and streams clear and clean by properly disposing of any trash, debris, motor oil or other household hazardous items. Follow directions when using fertilizers, pesticides and weed control chemicals.

### PARKS BY THE NUMBERS



25% of the land in Lakewood is parks, open space and trails.

Lakewood has over 7,400 acres of parks, open space and trails.

114 parks.

Over 240 miles of trails.

89% of residents live within a 10 minute walk to a park.

Lakewood has 47 acres of parks and open space for every 1,000 residents. Park and recreation experts call for having 11 acres for every 1,000 residents.



192 additional acres acquired since 2018.

\$14 million in voter-approved TABOR funds have been spent to buy parkland since 2018.



# EARTH DAY



**Saturday, April 26 | 11 a.m.-4 p.m. | FREE**

**Heritage Lakewood Belmar Park, 801 S. Yarrow St.**

**FEATURING MUSIC BY:**  
**PICK & HOWL AND SUPER MAGICK**

**EV Showcase • EV Ride & Drive • Electric Bikes**

Parade of Species with Costume Contest • Family Friendly Art Activities & Education  
Local Vendors & Food Trucks • Bike Valet




[Lakewood.org/EarthDay](http://Lakewood.org/EarthDay)

LAKEWOOD CULTURAL CENTER

**APRIL 12**  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

## LCC HOUSE PARTY

A Community Open House

Join us for activities, games & fun!  
[Lakewood.org/LCCHouseParty](http://Lakewood.org/LCCHouseParty)




# Know Your City Council Members



**Wendi Strom**

Mayor  
303-987-7040  
wstrom@lakewood.org



**Jeslin Shahrezaei**

Ward 1  
303-987-7728  
jshahrezaei@lakewood.org



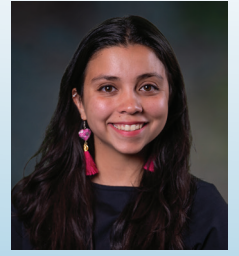
**Glenda Sinks**

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**Sophia Mayott-Guerrero**

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**David Rein**

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**Jacob LaBure**

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jlabure@lakewood.org



**Paula Nystrom**

Ward 5  
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To learn more about City Council, visit [Lakewood.org/CityCouncil](http://Lakewood.org/CityCouncil)

## COUNCIL SEAT CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRES (CONT.)

### **CRUZ (cont. from page 4)**

**Transparency & Community Engagement:** As HOA President and Community Leader, I've increased transparency by launching YouTube videos to inform and personally invite community input. I believe government should be just as accessible, and I will work to ensure residents stay informed and engaged in decisions that impact them.

**Education & Public Resources:** I want to make city policies more understandable and accessible by expanding resources, whether through online guides, language-accessible materials, or short explainer videos, so every resident can be informed and involved.

I will ensure that the government works with and for the people with policies that reflect the needs of Ward 3 residents.

### **3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

**Engagement & Transparency:** I will hold community listening sessions and ensure residents have a real seat at the table. Policy decisions should be shaped by those they impact most.

**Fact-Based Decision-Making:** Every decision should be backed by data, real community input, and long-term planning, not rushed votes or political pressure.

**Finding Common Ground:** Lakewood thrives when we bring people together to find solutions. I will work to balance environmental protections, responsible growth, and small business support in a way that benefits the entire community. My leadership will be guided by integrity, fairness, and a commitment to making Lakewood stronger for everyone.

### **FURMAN (cont. from page 4)**

My professional life has been dedicated to public architecture that serves and benefits communities. I lead a group of architects and engineers for Jacobs working in public architecture in this region.

### **3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

Understanding the controversial policy issue thoroughly, what are the legal constraints and opportunities, what are the concerns and questions people in the community have, and what the impacts will be. The open communication is critical, including efforts to hear from a broad scope of the community. If the policy is controversial there will be neighbors who are unhappy with the outcome, so the final part of this approach is critical, communication. To keep a transparent dialogue will include hard conversations while explaining policy decisions that do not satisfy everyone, but through candid conversations we can maintain trust in the process and an understanding of the decisions.

### **GONZÁLEZ (cont. from page 5)**

I have also mastered the art of patience which is very important to be an effective leader. I have been vegan for over 30 years and know how to coexist peacefully and with tolerance. My philosophy is that nobody is better than anyone else. I will demonstrate this in all my actions on Council as accountability is the most important thing to me aside from transparency. I intend to donate my salary to local nonprofits if elected. I do not want any of your money and you should be leery of individuals who accept money and financial incentives which are not for the betterment of the community. Money in politics is why we have such a corruption problem so I would like to avoid it all completely. No dark money here and I'm not for sale to any corporations or developers. I believe all power belongs to the people.

### **3) How would you approach controversial policy issues?**

I will handle them thoughtfully as it will set the tone for my leadership. I want to engage with all citizens and listen to all sides of the issue. Everyone's perspective matters and I would address the underlying concerns and gather as much information as possible to form a comprehensive view.

### **ZONING (cont. from page 1)**

While some of the meetings for elected officials are on the calendar, we've also scheduled an open house for residents on April 3, with details to come.

Here is the schedule for upcoming meetings for you to participate in the discussion. Visit [LakewoodSpeaks.org](http://LakewoodSpeaks.org) for meeting details:

- **March 17** – City Council Study Session.
- **April 9** – First Planning Commission public hearing.
- **April 23** – Second Planning Commission public hearing.

The Comprehensive Plan draft elements include the Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, Goals and Strategies, Future Land Use Map and Category Descriptions, and Glossary.

The proposed changes for the zoning updates cover three main areas: technical changes that clean up, clarify and modernize the zoning regulations; City Council requested changes that will address housing needs; and modifications required under new state laws. Visit the project websites to get the details on these.



### **Ballot drop-off boxes**

#### **WARD 3**

- Belmar Library, 555 S. Allison Parkway
- Lakewood Civic Center, 480 S. Allison Parkway
- Lakewood Link Rec Center, 1295 S. Reed St.
- Ray Ross Park, 680 S. Harlan St.

#### **WARD 4**

- Green Mountain Rec Center  
13198 W. Green Mountain Dr.

