



City's homeless navigators place hundreds into housing



Lakewood's Homeless Navigator Matt Wallington, wearing the "navigator" vest, responds with the West Metro Fire Rescue's Advanced Resource Medic (ARM) Car to assist a resident living on the streets who needed medical assistance.

Robert Cawood and his family were already living tenuously in an apartment near West 10th Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard when the pandemic hit and the bottom fell out. Cawood, a single father for 25 years, and his two adult children, Angela and Lucas who have disabilities, moved into a motel room for a while before their money ran out.

"We ended up hitting the streets. It was us three, our wagon and two cats out on the streets for three or four months," Cawood said.

But Cawood has become one of the many success stories created through Lakewood's homeless navigators, Matt Wallington and Princess Griffin. Since the city started the program in 2020, the two have successfully assisted 133 people into long-term housing and prevented 77 evictions.

Lakewood's navigators are housed with the Police Department's Community Action Team, which uses a co-responder model of navigators

and mental health professionals working in the field with police agents to address community challenges such as homelessness.

It was Wallington who approached Cawood and his family in 2020 as they panhandled at West 14th Avenue and Wadsworth Boulevard. Wallington offered to help in obtaining identification cards for the family and eventually placed them

into a temporary shelter in Aurora. With that breathing room, the family was able to work with Wallington and other agencies to obtain more permanent housing, and they currently live in an apartment in the Green Mountain area.

"I wasn't able at the time to do it on my own. It was just so much to do," Cawood said. "We were just basically trapped right there. We were very excited to run into Matt because he is just the greatest guy."

Homelessness is a complex and multifaceted problem—and, unfortunately, also a growing one. The 2023 Point in Time Count, which seeks to count those experiencing homelessness on a particular night in the metro area every year, showed that the number of unhoused people in Jefferson County increased to 854, up from 493 in 2022. Fifty percent of those were homeless for the first time in 2023.

The homeless navigator program is on the forefront of contacting those in the community living without housing, but the city is also working to tackle this homelessness in broader ways. Lakewood, in partnership with the nonprofit RecoveryWorks, recently received a significant state grant of \$9.3 million to open a navigation center at 8000 W. Colfax Ave. to provide shelter and support services for those needing

housing. The navigation center has been open for a few months now, and it also provides the location for the city's Extreme Weather Overflow Shelter for those needing shelter during extreme temperatures.

While this is a major step, the city's work on the issue continues to be on safe, stable and permanent housing, something that remains the focus for the homeless navigators.



Navigator program numbers:

- 133 residents housed.
- 77 evictions prevented.

RecoveryWorks Center:

- Centrally located.
- One-stop location for services.
- Details at [Lakewood.org/Navigation Center](https://Lakewood.org/NavigationCenter).

Pictured above: City of Lakewood Homeless Navigators, Matt Wallington and Princess Griffin.

See **NAVIGATORS** page 6

Resources available to navigate state plastic ban

Feeling overwhelmed by the changes introduced under Colorado's plastic pollution law, or wondering what it means for your small business? We've got you covered.

The city's online resource center, Lakewood.org/PlasticFree, provides a single location for information on what the law means for residents, customers and businesses. Passed in 2021, the law has phased in new requirements, and 2024 is the year that the law goes beyond just banning plastic carryout bags.

Beginning this year, only paper bags are allowed with a charge to customers of at least 10 cents per bag, which is different from the first phase in 2023 that allowed stores to offer plastic or paper carryout bags for 10 cents. Customers are encouraged to bring their own reusable bags to cut down on waste and pollution and save some money.

The state law also bans foam polystyrene, the material commonly thought of as Styrofoam, for takeout containers and cups at restaurants, food prep businesses and schools starting this year.

There are some exemptions to the law, particularly for small businesses, and more details including answers to frequently asked questions for businesses and residents are available in the online resource center. There is a place to ask a question of city staff, and there is also a form to report noncompliance with the law.

Residents can also take advantage of free reusable bags while supplies

last. Visit the Lakewood Cultural Center box office, the City Clerk's Office or any of Lakewood's recreation centers to pick up your Lakewood-branded bag featuring a scenic photo of Green Mountain taken by a resident.

Make it your new year's resolution to remember to bring your own bag and skip the plastic stuff at restaurants to do your part to reduce plastic pollution in Lakewood.

IT'S TIME TO TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CITY'S

SNOWPLOWING PLAN. Take the quiz on page 5 to find out if you are truly winterized for the season.



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Wendi Strom

I am so thrilled and honored to usher in 2024 as Lakewood’s newly elected mayor. As I’m closing in on the first 60 days here in office, we’ve been working hard to set the stage to ensure that 2024, and the years to follow, start off right. Transitions are not easy, but I find this time to be filled with so much hope and energy because we also have several new, very passionate City Council

members who joined us this year, as we are working hard to address our community’s needs and concerns. One of my primary priorities in my first year of office is to work to bring the “Mayor’s Office” to you. I’m looking forward to implementing initiatives that will enable me to get out in the community to hear from more of you. That includes restarting the “Coffee with the Mayor” events with community members, giving a “State of the City” update to you annually, and looking for more ways across our city to meet our community members where they are. My second priority in my first year in office will be working hard to build and grow collaborative efforts across our community. Collaboration with residents, community partners, our faith-based groups, and other stakeholders – like our businesses – helps make sure that we are getting policy and communication done in the best way to meet the needs of our community. At this writing, I’m excited to report that we saw exactly that kind

of critical collaboration succeed in making sure that our neighbors who are unhoused had a roof over their heads and food to eat during our recent days-long, bitter cold snap. During this cold snap, we had countless people and businesses step in to meet these needs. I’d like to send out a personal “thank you” to all of those who took on extra work through the Martin Luther King holiday weekend to make that happen: RecoveryWorks for staying open extended hours and offering your space overnight, and the Severe Weather Shelter Network and Bayaud Enterprises for helping with overnight sheltering needs. Plus, thanks to a coalition of over 40 community volunteers that delivered 120 lunch bags daily and helped with other food service needs; local businesses that donated food, including Jason’s Deli, Brothers BBQ, Providence at 5280, Chick-fil-A Belmar, Tstreet Grill, Little India Belmar, and The French Press; along with The Action Center, Jeffco Eats, Mutual Aid Monday, and countless community members who dropped

in on their own to donate food and cold-weather items. The Colorado Pet Pantry and SpayToday also joined in to make sure that pet supplies and food were available to help keep the furry companions of shelter users safe and sound. Seeing all of this come together took a lot of work but was truly priceless and, for some of our Lakewood residents, meant lives saved (and toes and fingers saved). While Lakewood’s form of government is set up that the city manager runs the day-to-day operations of the city, I believe my role to be critical in making sure that the residents in our city are able to contribute and benefit from other collaborations like this one. I invite you to join me in this effort as we learn to address our community’s needs and desires, both large and small. There is a place for everyone to contribute to make Lakewood feel like home. **Wendi Strom**
303-987-7040
wstrom@Lakewood.org

WARD 1



Jeslin Shahrezaei

Lakewood’s new mayor and council members are eager to get to work. There have already been several important topics brought forward by new members ranging from special permit use to the city’s response to increasing homelessness in Lakewood. To harness this momentum and determine shared priorities, Lakewood City Council meets annually during the first quarter of the year to discuss goals and find consensus. This year, City Council will be meeting the first weekend of March to accomplish this important work. In addition to setting a direction for the year, this is a chance to spend time together as a group and learn more about each other’s values for the wards and Lakewood as a whole. You can find updates on previous priorities at Lakewood.org/CouncilDashboard. In 2023, with full participation from all members, City Council determined the following priorities:

- Secure, Inclusive, Affordable Neighborhoods
- Safe and Accessible Streets
- Beautiful and Sustainable City
- Effective, Accountable, Transparent, and Data-Informed Government
- Short- and Long-Term Solutions for the Unhoused
- Strong and Healthy Economy

Lakewood, as Colorado’s fifth largest city and Denver’s nearest neighbor to the west, must balance setting goals and priorities for responding to long-term needs with emergent needs happening across the metro area. In Ward 1, there is a similar balancing for responding to the needs in this part of Lakewood that includes established neighborhoods, the Colfax corridor and five of the 10 largest employers. There are a lot of varying needs and stakeholders to consider. We, as your Ward 1 Council members, will continue to support and prioritize goals related to affordable housing, community safety and open spaces. The next few weeks will also see the ramping up of community engagement for updating the city’s Comprehensive Plan that will support the vision and goals for Lakewood over the next 15 years. You can participate through the open survey available at Lakewood.org/EnvisionLakewood2040 or attending open house and community engagement events throughout the year. There are many ways to reach us to share what you would like to see for priorities. We hope to welcome you at upcoming Ward 1 meetings and encourage you to email or call with topics that are important to you. Because of some scheduling

conflicts, we will be hosting coffee chats in March and April in place of the regularly scheduled Saturday morning meetings. Check Lakewood.org/WardMeetings for times and places to meet with us. We expect 2024 to be a year filled with planning, goal-setting and implementing. Your voice is important in this work, and we look forward to hearing from you. **Jeslin Shahrezaei**
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Lakewood
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WARD MEETINGS

Council members in each ward have monthly meetings in an informal setting for residents to share ideas and learn more about their community. Find out when your council members are having meetings and sign up to receive alerts about those meetings at Lakewood.org/WardMeetings.



Economic Development

Lakewood’s economic development wins in 2023

This past year was another strong one for Lakewood from an economic development perspective. There were more than 50 new projects completed, and dozens more are already under construction for 2024. New businesses, from startups to national tenants, chose sites across Lakewood for their new locations, bringing jobs and vibrancy to our local economy.

Small businesses are the heartbeat of our community, and in 2023, Lakewood’s Economic Development Office fostered a flourishing landscape for local entrepreneurs. Through targeted support programs, specific incentives and a community-driven ethos, Lakewood has become a nurturing environment for small businesses to thrive. These enterprises contribute not only to economic growth, but also add character and diversity to our neighborhoods. As we celebrate these economic triumphs, it’s important to acknowledge the collective efforts of local businesses, residents and community leaders. Lakewood’s success story is a testament to what can be achieved when a community works together with a shared vision for a prosperous future.

Union corridor

The Union corridor continues to be an employment hub for our community. Both existing businesses and new businesses chose to make this part of Lakewood their home. **St. Anthony’s Hospital**, 11600 W. Second Place, completed a multimillion-dollar expansion and



Alameda corridor

Bridge 33 Capital, the driving force behind **Belmar**, has successfully signed more than 25 new leases in the past two years since assuming ownership, encompassing an impressive 182,000 square feet of retail and office space. These mark significant milestones as Belmar prepares to celebrate its 20th anniversary in May. Openings include **Lady Nomada** (7167 W. Alaska Dr.), **Burlington** (7350 W. Alameda Ave.), **StretchLab** (7287 W. Alaska Dr.) and soon-to-open **Great Divide Brewery**. Other new businesses in the Alameda corridor include **Any Lab Test Now** (7650 W. Virginia Ave.), **ANB Bank** (7950 W. Alameda Ave.) and **Billy’s Philly’s** (1000 S. Wadsworth Blvd.). Finally, the **Lakewood Reinvestment Authority (LRA)** purchased the

New residences have also opened, providing housing for those working in and wanting to live in Lakewood. **Novel-WFF** (6293 W. Jewell Ave.), **5290 Flats** (5290 W. Arizona Ave.) and the **Reed Street Townhomes** (1210 S. Reed Way) were completed in 2023. Residents living in these locations will soon be able to enjoy **92 Chicken** (1862 S. Wadsworth Blvd.) and **Peak Kava** (7576 W. Jewell Ave.).

West Colfax corridor

Robinson Place, affordable housing for seniors at 2275 Wadsworth Blvd., opened in 2023, with this opening overshadowed by **Casa Bonita** reopening. Redevelopment and reinvention moved forward north of Sixth Avenue such as the **Notable Apartments**, which refurbished a vacant office building into affordable apartments for those working in the arts and includes the **Lakewood School of Music**, with music rooms and a performance hall.

Colorado Mills continues to thrive and renovate, adding more stores including **5280 Burger Bar** and the immersive art experience known as **Prismajic** at 14500 W. Colfax Ave.

The openings of **Danny Ray’s Food and Spirits** (11353 W. Colfax Ave.), **Rise and Shine** (615 Garrison St.) and **Tea Hee Boba** (6677 W. Colfax Ave.) proved once again that mom-and-pop restaurant options can thrive in our community.

The LRA purchased the former Blue Sky Motel at 6205 W. Colfax Ave., saved the iconic sign, mitigated the asbestos on-site and will demolish the dilapidated buildings. The property will be marketed as a “blank canvas” in 2024.

2023 was an exciting year, and the Economic Development Office is looking forward to what 2024 will bring. Want to know more about development projects as they happen? Check our Development Highlights Map at Lakewood.org/DevelopmentHighlightsMap.

Economic Development Office
303-987-7730
ED@lakewood.org



ANB Bank (7950 W. Alameda Ave.)



Any Lab Test Now (7650 W. Virginia Ave.)



Burlington (7350 W. Alameda Ave.)



Robinson Place (2275 Wadsworth Blvd.)



TJ Maxx (5152 S. Wadsworth Blvd.)



Danny Ray’s Food and Spirits (11353 W. Colfax Ave.)

remodel of its existing facility. **Mile High Flood District** officially opened its new headquarters at 12575 W. Bayaud Ave. **ASEC Engineers** (300 Union Blvd., suite 300), the **Veterans Administration** (155 Van Gordon St.) and **Tetra Tech** (390 Union Blvd., suite 400) invested heavily in Lakewood. They bolstered employment, which supported the corridor’s many dining and shopping services.

Big Daddy’s Bagels, **Dunkin’ Donuts** and a soon-to-be-completed **We Knead Donuts** and **Bread + Salt** will add colorful breakfast options to the Union experience.

property at 6051 W. Alameda Ave., demolished the dilapidated and crime-ridden motel and will market the vacant property for redevelopment in the coming months.

South Lakewood

Business development was robust south of Mississippi Avenue, which brought economic activity and jobs to this part of our community. **TJ Maxx** opened a new store at 5152 S. Wadsworth Blvd., and **7-Eleven** redeveloped the corner at 1110 S. Wadsworth Blvd., with a **Laredo Taco** included.

ARTS, PARKS & Recreation

ARTS



LCCP SPRING SEASON

Lakewood Cultural Center Presents a spring season of thrilling and unexpected performances by a cello/piano duo, jazz fusion supergroup, wind ensemble, revival of “The Music Man,” and culminating with an energetic Flamenco dance troupe! Purchase tickets and view the full spring schedule online.

Lakewood.org/LCCPresents

NEW EXHIBITIONS

Lakewood Cultural Center and Civic Center galleries will host exhibitions investigating the role of size within artistic practice, ceramic sculptures, and the wildlife of Lakewood in March and work by Jeffco teachers, middle school students and International Baccalaureate students later in the spring.

Lakewood.org/Exhibitions

GET INVOLVED

Heritage Lakewood Belmar Park will host an opening reception for a new exhibit, “Get Involved: Civic Engagement in Lakewood” on March 5 from 4 to 8 p.m. Discover how making a difference has evolved over the past century.

Lakewood.org/Exhibitions

PARKS & EVENTS



BEAR CREEK PARK PASS

Have you purchased a 2024 Bear Creek Lake Park annual pass? Get access to the park for the whole year for just \$80.

Lakewood.org/BCLPPass

EARTH DAY

Give back. Register to join the Earth Day Volunteer Project at Bear Creek Lake Park on April 20 from 8 a.m. to noon.

Lakewood.org/ParkPrograms

FAMILY ARCHERY

Join an evening archery session for families at the Bear Creek Archery Range! Instructors will teach range safety and the basics of shooting a bow, and after one-on-one instruction, participants will be able to practice sharpening their skills. All supplies included. Beginners only.

Lakewood.org/Register, key word search “Archery”

SAVE THE DATES

Mark your calendars for the return of Lakewood’s signature events.

June 1 Rockin’ Block Party
June 12 Sounds Exciting Concerts begin
July 3 Big Belmar Bash
Oct 5 & 6 Cider Days

RECREATION



POSSIBILITIES EXPO

Explore resources supporting different abilities, including therapeutic recreation, adaptive sports, health care, funding sources, transportation and more at this inclusive event at Charles Whitlock Recreation Center on Saturday, Feb. 3 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lakewood.org/Possibilities

TEEN ROOM NOW OPEN

Teens 13–18 are invited to hang out and play games in the new teen room at Green Mountain Recreation Center. Open 3–6 p.m., Mon.-Thurs. with purchase of a teen pass.

Lakewood.org/TeenRoom

ACTIVE ADULTS

Check out the activities related to all interests at Clements Community Center. Find Lunch & Learn programs, excursions, tech help, dance, creative writing, fitness and more on the “Active Adult 55+” tab of the new online catalog.

Lakewood.org/Register

Host your next event at a *Lakewood venue!*



Whether you are looking for a location to have a beautiful wedding or reception, performance, fundraiser, business meeting or family event, we have a variety of unique spaces to suit your needs.

Let us help you find the perfect venue.

Lakewood.org/Rentals



Lakewood
Community Resources



Lakewood LOVES TREES

Purchase a tree for your yard for just \$25 during the Lakewood Tree Sale!

March 1-31
or while supplies last.

Lakewood.org/TreeSale

YOUTH PROGRAM GRANTS



Does your organization provide programs and services supporting youth activities? Apply for a grant from Lakewood’s 2024 Youth Program Grant beginning March 1.

Lakewood.org/YouthProgramGrant



Lakewood
Full of Possibilities.

How much do you know about Lakewood’s snow plan?

Having the streets plowed in the winter is one of the most important services the city provides to residents and businesses. Find out how much you know about Lakewood’s annual snow plan by taking this quiz:

1. How many snowplows does the city have to operate during a snowstorm?

2. How much money per resident does the city typically spend on snowplowing annually?

3. Does the city plow major or secondary streets first?

4. Name two of the nine major roadways in Lakewood that the city is not responsible for plowing.

5. Does the city plow residential streets in every snowstorm?
- (Answers at end of story)

Plowing priorities

Lakewood’s first responsibility is to plow and keep maintained the city’s major streets to allow higher traffic volumes to flow and to provide access to emergency vehicles. Lakewood’s goal is to provide a transportation system that’s travelable and as safe as possible for the conditions.

The city has 27 snowplows that operate on a 24-hour schedule during storms, and Lakewood spends about \$1.3 million annually on snow removal, which amounts to about \$8 per resident.

Lakewood’s snowplows first work on 160 miles of Priority 1 streets, which include Lakewood’s major arterial and collector streets such as Union and Bear Creek boulevards and West Alameda and West Jewell avenues. Plows are sent to Priority 1 streets as soon as any measurable snow begins to accumulate on the pavement. They will remain on Priority 1 routes until snow accumulation has slowed, streets have been cleared as much as possible and deicing material has been applied where necessary.

When those items are accomplished on Priority 1 streets, the snowplowing crew moves to Priority 2 and 3 streets, which are 125 miles of minor collector streets, hilly areas and school and shopping areas. Plows, however, might have to leave plowing these streets to return to Priority 1 routes in certain weather conditions. A map of the Priority 1, 2 and 3 routes is available by calling 303-987-7950 or visiting Lakewood.org/SnowPlan.

In certain conditions, the city sprays a light application of liquid anti-icing material, which is a brine solution, on some arterial streets such as Union Boulevard in preparation before a storm. This anti-icing material prevents snow from bonding to the pavement and makes plowing more effective. Once snow accumulates, streets

are treated with a solid deicing product known as Ice Slicer, a red salt that will melt the snow and provide traction. Major routes are treated with a combination of red salt and brine.

During major snowstorms or blizzards, residents can report concerns about unplowed streets online at Lakewood.org/RequestLakewood or by calling 303-987-7954. Because of the volume of calls during large snowstorms, the phone number only takes messages, and calls are not returned.

New information in the plan

The city’s Public Works team has great new information available about snow removal on sidewalks, shared-use paths and bike facilities that the city will clear during winter storms. Maps showing where this snow removal occurs are now available at Lakewood.org/SnowPlan.

State highways

Several of the main roads in Lakewood are state highways, and the Colorado Department of Transportation plows these roads. These are U.S. 6/West Sixth Avenue, U.S. 40/West Colfax Avenue, Morrison Road, U.S. 285/Hampden Avenue, Kipling Parkway, Wadsworth and Sheridan boulevards, C-470 and Interstate 70.

To report unsafe driving conditions or unplowed state highways, please use CDOT’s website, Codot.gov/topcontent/contact-cdot.



Residential streets

Lakewood has about 204 miles of residential streets that are not part of the priority routes, and these streets are plowed only when snow depths are seriously impeding vehicle mobility and melting is not expected to occur quickly. Plowing residential streets costs the city an additional minimum of \$75,000 for each snowstorm, and the city considers the conditions and weather forecast before deciding whether to plow residential streets.

Sidewalks

After storms, particularly blizzards, it often takes everyone working together to dig out, and residents are encouraged to check on elderly or neighbors with disabilities to help shovel their

sidewalks and driveways. If you can provide snow shoveling assistance to individuals in your area, the city encourages you to become a snow pal by organizing an effort to assist your neighbors who may need some help.

Lakewood requires sidewalks and business driveways to be cleared within 24 hours after the end of a storm. Sidewalks left unshoveled create icy conditions that are hazardous to pedestrians, children walking to school and those in wheelchairs. Residents can report sidewalks that aren’t shoveled at Lakewood.org/RequestLakewood or at 303-987-7975.

WHEN YOU SEE A SNOWPLOW

Diagram illustrating the snowplow's field of vision and blind spots. The plow is shown from a top-down perspective, with its rearview mirrors and plow blade visible. The diagram highlights the plow's field of vision (indicated by a green cone) and blind spots (indicated by orange areas). A car is shown in the plow's field of vision, and a sand bucket is shown being dropped. The diagram also includes a warning to stay 70 feet (four car lengths) from the maintenance vehicle so the driver can see you.

SNOW PLAN ANSWERS:

1. 27 snowplows operate on a 24-hour schedule during storms.

2. About \$8 per resident.

3. The city plows Priority 1 streets first, which are arterials and collector streets.

4. The state is responsible for plowing West Sixth Avenue, West Colfax Avenue, Morrison Road, U.S. Highway 285/Hampden Avenue, Kipling Parkway, Wadsworth and Sheridan boulevards, Interstate 70 and C-470.

5. No. Review “Residential Streets” section to understand when these streets are plowed.

HOW DID YOU DO?

Five correct answers: Time to become a snowplow driver.

Three to four correct answers: A little practice will get you winterized.

One to two correct answers: Dig yourself out by visiting Lakewood.org/SnowPlan.

Google Fiber

Construction on Google Fiber network underway

Microtrenching for construction of the Google Fiber network started in December, an important step in bringing the fiber-to-the-building network that will expand the competitive market for high-speed broadband services to the city’s residents and businesses.

During the month, 144,000 linear feet were permitted and approved for construction, 15% more than the company’s

mutually aligned target with Lakewood Public Works. Construction resources will start to increase between now and spring thaw in an effort to begin offering service to the first customers in the summer months, but weather conditions in January and February will dictate construction pace.

To stay updated on the progress of the project, visit Lakewood.org/GoogleFiber,

where you can find answers to frequently asked questions and contact information for Google Fiber.

Lakewood was the first city in Colorado to reach an agreement with Google Fiber to build the network, and the city joins a select group of cities nationwide where Google Fiber will be deploying its 100% fiber optic internet service.

Lakewood

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SHOT SPOT VACCINATION & DOG LICENSE CLINIC

All leashed dogs and restrained cats are welcome!

Saturday, Feb. 3, 2024

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

SpayToday | 1401 Ammons St.

LICENSE YOUR DOG FOR \$20

Available for all Jefferson County residents.

Cash or check accepted.

Visit Lakewood.org/ShotSpot for more information.

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Planning for the 40 West ArtLine's future

Exciting news! City Council will be considering important documents that will set the vision for the 40 West ArtLine and create design standards for future investments along this four-mile outdoor art experience. In December, the Planning Commission unanimously adopted the 40 West ArtLine Framework Plan and recommended that City Council approve the plan as part of Lakewood's overall Comprehensive Plan. In January, Lakewood's Design Review Commission recommended approval of the Design Standards and Guidelines and recommended that City Council adopt them. Both documents will be presented to City Council during a public hearing at its Feb. 26 meeting. Hundreds of community members helped develop these two documents. To learn more about this project, visit LakewoodTogether.org/40WestArtLine. To provide comments for the Feb. 26 public hearing, visit LakewoodSpeaks.org.

Registration required for short-term rentals

Since last fall, all short-term rentals in the city must be licensed. The City Council approved regulations for these rentals in March 2023. The city then opened the registration process on May 1, 2023, and required all of these properties to be licensed by Sept. 1, 2023. The city conducted

extensive outreach about these new regulations and license requirements including contacting platforms such as AirBnB and VRBO to ensure those companies are aware of the new regulations.

A short-term rental is the rental of any property, or any portion of property, for no more than 29 consecutive days, but does not include hotels, motels or beds-and-breakfasts. The city allows homeowners to obtain one license to rent their primary residence, and a primary residence can take several forms including a single-family home, a condominium, or a unit within a duplex, triplex or multifamily residence.

An online application for a license, along with answers to frequently asked questions, is available at Lakewood.org/STR. Residents can also file complaints online about short-term rentals on the same webpage.

First phase begins for fixing flooding

In January, construction for the first phase of the North Dry Gulch Floodplain Mitigation Project got underway. This major stormwater project will reduce the floodplain that runs along the West Colfax corridor to alleviate flooding that has plagued businesses and others in the area.

Phase 1 of construction is starting along West 14th Avenue. Details about the project, along with future phases and information about current construction,

including a map, photos and ways to receive construction updates, are available at Lakewood.org/NorthDryGulch.

North Dry Gulch is a major drainageway that runs for approximately 1.5 miles parallel to West Colfax Avenue through Lakewood. Like other gulches running west to east through Lakewood, it remains dry through most of the year. But when it rains, it fills with water as it drains stormwater runoff from a 1.3-square-mile area.

Flooding in the area is a result of paved streets, parking lots and other hard surfaces built in the 1930s and 1940s that eliminated the natural gulch that carried away stormwater runoff. Prior to Lakewood's incorporation in 1969 and before modern floodplain management, West Colfax Avenue was constructed along with developments on private properties along North Dry Gulch without properly accounting for storm runoff needs. Lakewood and the Mile High Flood District have established a master plan in conjunction with residents and business owners in the corridor to fix the flooding.

Winter Bike to Work Day

Embrace the cold this year and join Lakewood Public Works and the West Corridor TMA on Friday morning, Feb. 9 to celebrate

Colorado's annual Winter Bike to Work Day. We'll be at the east entrance of Addenbrooke Park from 7 to 9 a.m. with breakfast burritos, coffee, reflective accessories and more. Stop by to say "hi" on your way to work or wherever you're cycling! Find more breakfast stations and register to ride at BikeToWorkDay.co.

A place for everything and everything in its place

The Quail Street Recycling Center is your place for recycling glass bottles and jars, cardboard, scrap metal, paper, aluminum beverage cans and plastic bottles. For details, call 303-987-7974 or visit Lakewood.org/recycling.

Lakewood Community Grant Program

The city's Community Grant Program is open for nonprofits to submit grant applications for this charitable giving program. Administered in coordination with the Lakewood Legacy Foundation, the grant program opens Feb. 1 for applications and closes April 1. This program establishes a process for review and evaluation of funding requests from nonprofits serving Lakewood residents. A total of \$100,000 will be granted during the 2024 program. For more information and to apply online, visit Lakewood.org/CommunityGrant.



continued from page 1

Navigators

For Griffin and Wallington, working with those who are unhoused begins with establishing trust.

"Through repeated contacts and things like that with people, we can earn their trust," Wallington said. "When we earn that trust, they start to share with us, and we can kind of figure out what's really going on."

Once that trust is established, the navigators attempt to identify the obstacles that are preventing people from obtaining long-term housing, such as the lack of identification or other documentation that makes it difficult to access support programs or secure employment. Then they work with agencies around the state and county to obtain housing vouchers, which do not come at a predictable pace or time of year.

"For the most part we are dipping into the same pot that everyone else

is. We don't have a special allocation," Griffin noted. "When providers open up their lists, we jump in that pool with everyone else."

In the case of the Cawoods, Angela's developmental disability combined with proper documentation of that disability made her and her family a higher priority for housing, and they were able to obtain a housing voucher relatively quickly.

Even when vouchers become available, Griffin and Wallington must work to ease the concerns of nervous landlords renting through the voucher program.

"We leverage our services for that to happen," Wallington said. "We'll continue to follow them (the residents) for up to a year, making sure they know how to set up an account with Xcel, how to pay their

rent on time. We leverage that to help reduce their risk (of becoming homeless again)."

Not every person who is homeless is ready or willing to find long-term housing, but navigators work with residents on what they are willing to do and build relationships to reduce homelessness in the community in a very personal and direct way.

"Some of the more resistant people are falling into our orbit, even if it takes them longer to trust us," Wallington said. "We can offer them services to help them out so that our relationship allows us to say, 'You can't be at this park.'"

Griffin and Wallington say that their goal is to address the impacts of homelessness on everyone in Lakewood from those who lack housing to business owners, residents and visitors. Working hand-

in-hand with law enforcement, they are creating a more lasting solution for residents like the Cawoods.

"We're a community, and this is a community issue," Griffin said. "We need to all come together to figure it out."

"We're a community, and this is a community issue," Griffin said. "We need to all come together to figure it out."

— Princess Griffin, homeless navigator, City of Lakewood

Managing runoff from snow and rain storms

Stormwater management is essential to prevent flooding, protect the environment and ensure we have a strong and resilient city. As part of that management, all City of Lakewood stormwater utility customers will now be billed their once-a-year stormwater utility service charge in January.

This change in billing is designed to simplify the billing process for customers, increase efficiency for processing these bills and ensure equity in the billing process citywide. Previously, stormwater utility customers received their stormwater utility bills at different times of the year depending on where they lived in the city. Now, all annual stormwater utility bills for 2024 were mailed Jan. 16, and customers have 90 days to pay it. Previously, customers had 30 days to pay.

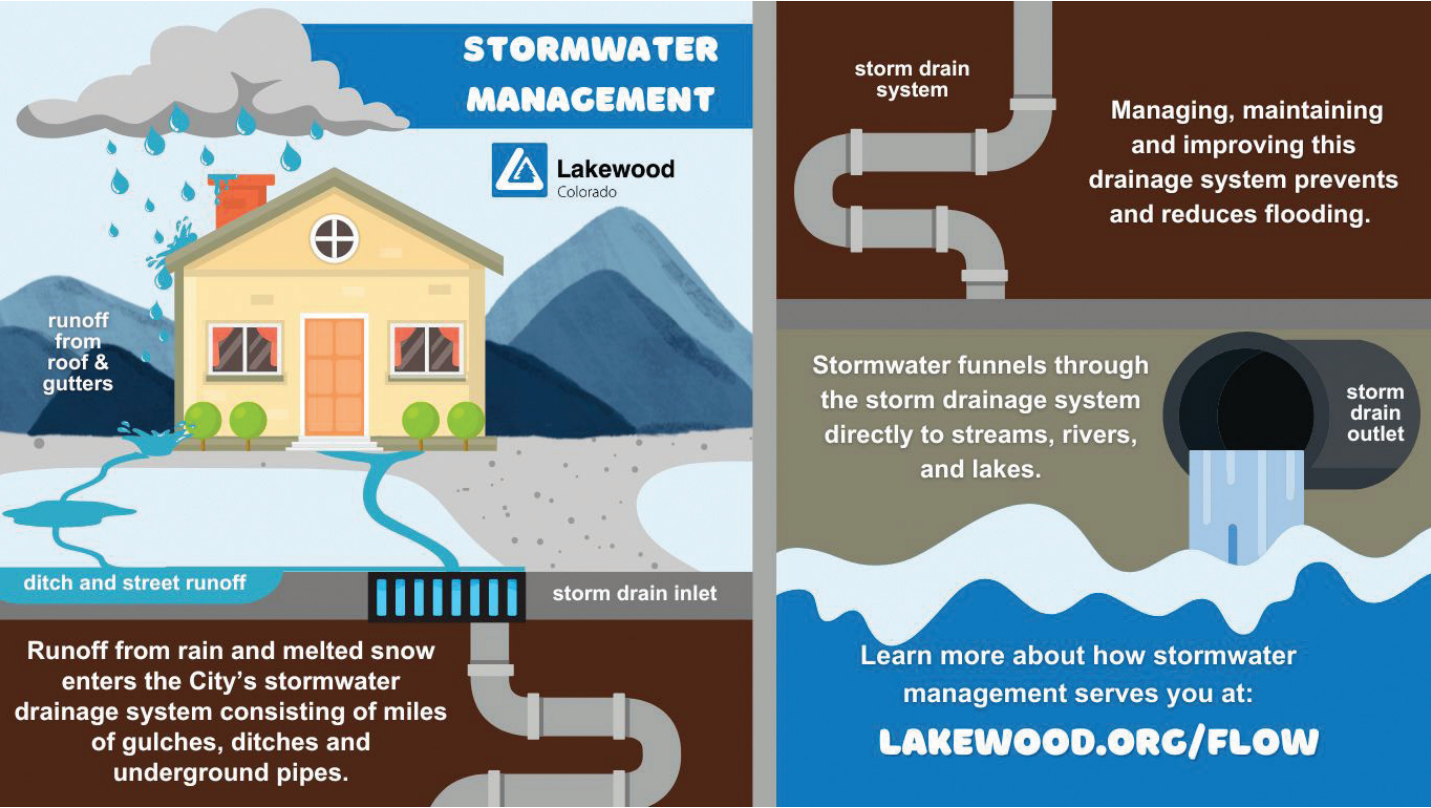
All property owners in Lakewood, including townhomes, city and other government buildings and nonprofit organizations, are billed based on \$4.74 per month in 2024 for every 2,250 square feet of hard surfaces that create runoff on the property. That means for a single-family home or duplexes, the bill is \$56.88, and for an average big box store, the bill is \$12,175. This once-a-year charge fluctuates each year based on inflation.

More information about this change, including an informative video and answers to frequently asked questions, is available at Lakewood.org/Flow.

Stormwater is rain or melting snow that doesn't soak into the ground and runs off hard surfaces such as driveways, roofs, parking lots, sidewalks, and patios. Rather than soaking into the soil, stormwater

quickly funnels through the city's stormwater drainage system consisting of 18 major drainageways or gulches running west to east through Lakewood as well as miles of ditches and underground pipes and culverts. Managing, maintaining and improving this drainage system prevents and reduces flooding in the city.

Flooding can affect everyone if roads are blocked or damaged, hindering local traffic and emergency response vehicles. It can also occur in areas where there are no floodplains, low-lying areas or drainage gulches. The stormwater management utility service charge pays to maintain and make improvements to this system because reducing flooding contributes to the quality of life for all residents and businesses.



Have a project you'd like to see completed in your neighborhood?

If your neighborhood needs a picnic facility, new playground, community garden, public art or a similar improvement, apply for a grant from Lakewood's 2024 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. The application

process for these grants is now open, and it closes at 5 p.m. on March 1. The online application and more information about the requirements are available at Lakewood.org/NPP. Grants of up to \$60,000 are available for a project, with a total of \$160,000 to be awarded in 2024. 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.



Morse Park rain garden.



Comprehensive Plan Update Process

Lakewood is embarking on an exciting process to update our Comprehensive Plan, and we want to hear from you! One of the first big ways to participate is by answering a four question survey, so please take look at the insert in this edition of the newsletter to fill out the survey, with postage paid to mail your response back to us. This will help us identify our community's shared values and vision for Lakewood's future and the important topics we need to address in the updated plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is an important document that will be used to inform decisions around housing, transportation, climate action, parks and more over the next 15 years. The survey kicks off the conversation with the community about ways to update this important document, but there will be many more opportunities to share your ideas.

During the next year and a half, we will be having a community conversation about Lakewood's future and how we can get closer to reaching this vision with goals and strategies.



Ways to learn about the process and participate:

- Take the vision and values survey on the insert in this edition or online.
- Visit Lakewood.org/EnvisionLakewood2040.
- Sign up for email updates on the website.
- Help spread the word about this project to your family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers in Lakewood! We want to hear from as many community members in Lakewood as possible, and we need your help to do this.

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To learn more about City Council, visit [Lakewood.org/CityCouncil](https://lakewood.org/CityCouncil)

2024 city budget tackles tough community issues

The city’s annual budget that City Council approved for 2024 tackles some of Lakewood’s most difficult issues by providing funding and staff to address those challenges.

For 2024, the key areas of emphasis include developing effective solutions for the unhoused population, fostering affordable neighborhoods, ensuring the safety and accessibility for all users of our streets and advancing the ongoing adoption of sustainable practices for both the city and its residents.

The city must also remain focused on investing in the city’s infrastructure now and in the future. During the pandemic, the city increased its savings to be able to help pay to replace aging infrastructure and other needs in the coming years.

For the unhoused, the budget includes an additional homeless services coordinator in the Planning Department to directly engage with those who are unhoused and coordinate support with other agencies within Lakewood to move these residents into stable housing and off the streets. The budget also includes additional funds for hotel vouchers, bus passes, rental support, homeless encampment abatement, and a variety of other activities. This position comes in addition to the city’s homeless navigators who have been on board since 2020 and the opening of the RecoveryWorks Navigation Center at 8000 W. Colfax Ave.

In the Police Department, two mental health co-responders will be added in 2024 as additional support

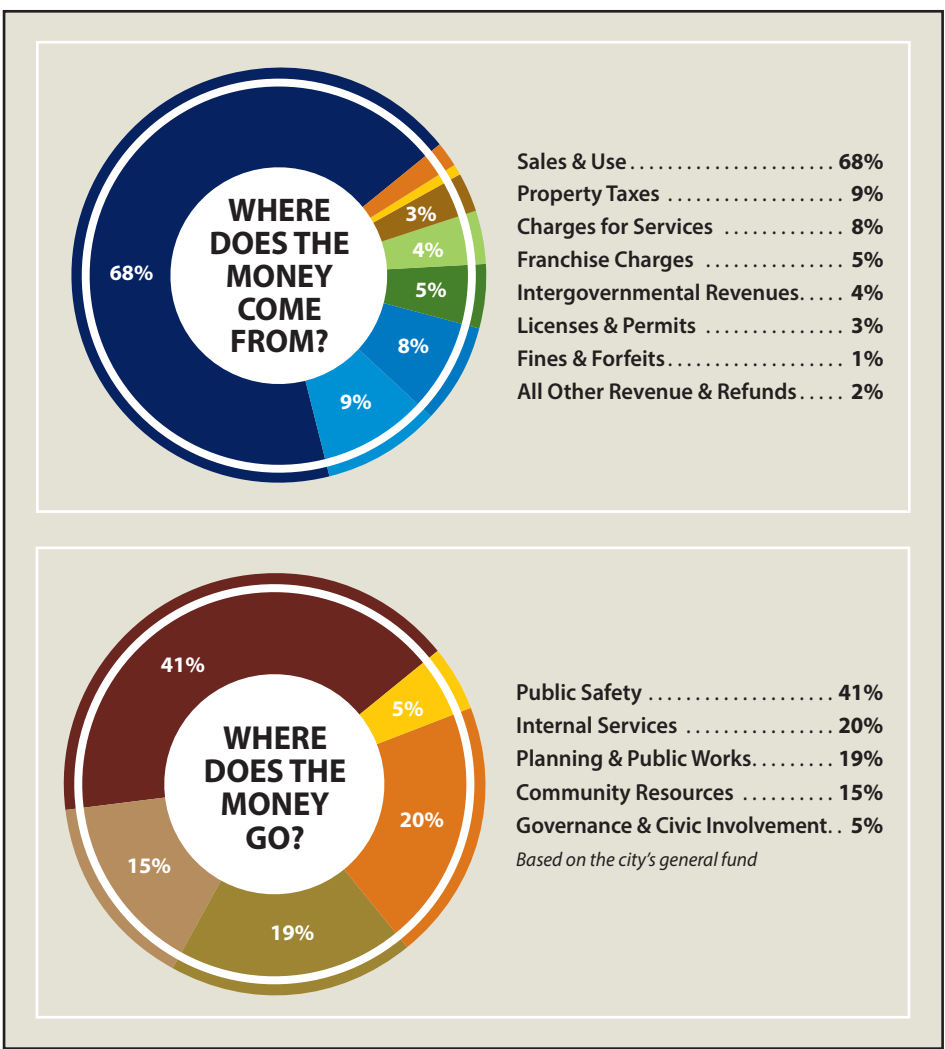
for those who are unhoused or facing mental health struggles. As sustainability continues to become more important, two additional positions are in next year’s budget for focusing on efficiencies within city facilities and for Zero Waste planning.

In total, 13 new positions will be funded with the 2024 budget including five positions in Public Works, which incorporate positions for council priorities such as traffic safety, building permits and support for construction of the Google Fiber network in Lakewood.

The 2024 budget includes funds for the North Dry Gulch Floodplain Mitigation Project to alleviate flooding that has plagued businesses and others in the West Colfax Avenue corridor. The first phase of construction for this project began in January, and details are available at Lakewood.org/NorthDryGulch.

The budget also provides funding for the West Colfax Safety Project, which will improve safety for all who use West Colfax. More than 20,000 vehicles use the street daily alongside residents, visitors, and customers who walk, cross the street or get on buses. Unfortunately, the eastern section of West Colfax has had the highest concentration of traffic injuries and deaths in Lakewood, and the project is designed to reduce those. Construction on the first phase of the project is expected to get underway in 2024. The project’s website is LakewoodTogether.org/WestColfax.

The 2024 Annual Budget is \$334 million, which is larger than the 2023 budget mostly because of the North



Dry Gulch and the West Colfax Safety projects. But it also includes funds for installation of more shared-use paths and sidewalks, the first four miles of separated bike lanes with vertical barriers to separate cyclists from motorists and annual street repaving and maintenance.

It also includes installing solar panels to reduce the use of electricity from fossil fuels at city facilities and multiple charging

stations for electric vehicles at the Civic Center, Public Safety Center and several recreation centers that will be available to the public. Grants for residents and businesses to install measures that reduce water use on their properties are also part of the budget, along with updating and improving parks, playgrounds and recreation options.

To review the complete budget, visit Lakewood.org/Budgets.