



Introduction

**Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan
Plan Organization
Planning Process & Community Input**

James J. Richey Gallery

Lakewood

Introduction



Guiding Principles

The City of Lakewood is committed to providing a high quality of life for its residents. This commitment is reflected in the City's guiding principles, which serve as the foundation for all City decisions and actions.

Lakewood's Core Goals

- Provide a high quality of life for all residents.
- Maintain and enhance the City's natural resources.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for all residents.
- Provide a variety of housing options for all residents.
- Provide a variety of recreational opportunities for all residents.

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Lakewood
City of Lakewood



INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range plan that looks 10 years into the future. It articulates a clear vision for the future of Lakewood and provides the goals and actions to achieve that vision. It is a policy document that provides guidance to City Council, Planning Commission, City staff, residents, businesses, and developers to make informed decisions about the current and future needs of the community. It is a valuable tool developed to:

- Promote the community's vision for the future of Lakewood;
- Maintain and improve the physical environment of the City;
- Respond to the social, environmental, economic, and demographic realities and forecasts;
- Identify and set budgeting priorities;
- Provide for the health, safety and welfare of the entire Lakewood community; and
- Plan in a thoughtful, cohesive, and comprehensive manner.

Plan Organization

The Comprehensive Plan is divided into eight chapters, beginning with this introductory chapter. Chapter 2 provides a brief overview of Lakewood and Chapter 3 sets forth the overall vision for the City, which guided the development of this Plan. Chapters 4 through 7 each address a unique topic and include a guiding principle and specific goals and action steps to achieve the vision contained in Chapter 3. Chapter 8 contains recommendations for implementation of the goals and action steps identified in Chapters 4 through 7.

Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

Vision Statement: A broad, aspirational statement providing philosophies to direct where the city should be in the future.

Guiding Principle: A positive, general principle that becomes an important foundation in guiding the development of goals.

Goals: A very specific recommendation to implement the vision and guiding principle.

Action Step: A recommended action to be taken to implement a stated goal.

Plan Chapters

Chapter 1: Introduction outlines the purpose for the Comprehensive Plan, the Plan organization and the planning process.

Chapter 2: Background provides a brief history of the Lakewood community and describes its regional context and the current land use patterns.

Chapter 3: Moving Forward identifies the overall vision for the City of Lakewood as it looks forward to the next 10 years. It contains future demographic and employment projections and sets the future image and character for Lakewood.

Chapter 4: Lakewood Lives addresses the overall livability of Lakewood. It includes a wide range of topics including sections on neighborhoods; housing; family services; historic preservation; arts and culture; parks, trails and recreation; schools and libraries; and public services.

Chapter 5: Lakewood Innovates identifies the goals and strategies for a strong and sustainable economic base and provides guidance for reinvestment and future development in Lakewood. This chapter includes goals for identified growth areas, activity areas, and employment areas throughout the city.

Chapter 6: Lakewood Moves focuses on future transportation recommendations for the city. It identifies a desired network of improvements and recommendations for an interconnected system of roadways, trails, and sidewalks.

Chapter 7: Lakewood Sustains encompasses the city's goals for environmental sustainability. It includes sections on leadership; air quality and climate; water; biodiversity; natural resources and ecosystems; energy in built environments; and waste. It sets the direction for Lakewood to support the environmental sustainability elements to ensure Lakewood is a leader in sustainability practices.

Chapter 8: Implementation organizes and prioritizes the implementation of the goals and action steps within the Comprehensive Plan. It identifies time frames for implementation and the responsible entity or person for implementation.

Planning Process

The planning process involved multiple tasks and steps including staff analysis, staff research, and public input. These steps are described in detail below.

Review of Existing Conditions & Future Projections

Staff conducted a comprehensive review of demographic, economic, and growth trends and forecasts. This analysis helped to identify the current and future needs of the city and to develop a clear understanding of anticipated growth patterns and trends facing Lakewood in the next 10 to 15 years. These growth trends are discussed in more detail in the *Moving Forward* and *Lakewood Innovates* chapters of this Plan.

Analysis of Plan Amendments to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan

As part of the Comprehensive Plan update process, City staff evaluated 23 plans that had been adopted as amendments to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. This included a thorough review of all neighborhood plans, corridor plans, station area plans, and special area plans that have been developed since 1995. The specific plans are identified in the box below. The evaluation identified the policies and goals in each plan that should be folded into the updated Comprehensive Plan, the goals that had been accomplished, and the goals that are addressed in other City plans or policies. When evaluating each plan, staff considered the following questions:

- Is the policy or goal addressed in another City policy or ordinance such as the *Flood Plain Management Ordinance* or the *Transportation Engineering Design Standards*?
- Is the policy or goal addressed in a Citywide plan including the *Historic Preservation Plan*, the *Community Resources Master Plan*, the *Bicycle Master Plan*, and the *Public Arts Master Plan*?
- Was the policy or goal addressed in the 2012 Zoning Ordinance update?
- Is the policy or goal one that a neighborhood, business organization, or other entity is responsible for implementing?
- Has the goal been accomplished?
- Will the policy or goal be addressed in this Comprehensive Plan?

This detailed review affords the opportunity to assess changes in the community over time, provides a holistic approach to planning citywide, and consolidates comparable and compatible goals into one document. It ensures a broader and more efficient approach to planning citywide while ensuring that residents' expectations arising from prior planning efforts continue to be properly acknowledged and reflected.

Copies of the historical neighborhood, corridor, special area, and station area plans are available in the Lakewood Planning Department library and online for reference by staff and residents.

2003 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Evaluated

Neighborhood Plans

- Jefferson Gardens Neighborhood Plan
- Molholm Area Plan
- North Alameda Area Plan
- Lasley Neighborhood Plan
- Eiber Neighborhood Plan
- South Alameda Area Plan
- Morse Park Neighborhood Plan
- Addenbrooke/Belmar Park Neighborhood Plan
- Edgewood Neighborhood Plan

Special Area Plans

- Jewell & Wadsworth Specific Area Plan
- Federal Center Comprehensive Plan

Station Area Plans

- Sheridan Boulevard Station Area Plan
- Wadsworth Boulevard Station Area Plan
- Oak Street Station Area Plan
- Union Corridor Station Area Plan
- Lamar Street Station Area Plan
- Garrison Street Station Area Plan

Corridor Plans

- North Kipling Strategic Plan
- Sheridan Boulevard Strategic Plan
- Mississippi Avenue Strategic Plan
- Alameda Cornerstone Plan
- West Colfax Avenue Action Plan
- North Wadsworth Boulevard Corridor Plan

Community Outreach

Initial Open Houses

The City began the public process of updating the Comprehensive Plan with five public open houses in the fall of 2013. The open houses featured guest speakers, exhibits, maps, city information, comment boards, and surveys. The purpose of the open houses was to solicit community input, views, and ideas on Lakewood's future. Each open house focused on a specific topic and objective as described below:

- September 18, 2013: **Moving Forward**. The objective of the Moving Forward open house was to receive input to guide and develop a vision for the type of city Lakewood should be in 2025. Lakewood's changing demographics and population growth, as well as opportunities and challenges facing Lakewood were discussed to help inform that vision.

Key concepts conveyed by the community:

- Lakewood has an opportunity to plan well for growth and development.
 - Lakewood needs to maintain its current character and its great neighborhoods and parks while addressing and accommodating growth.
 - Lakewood needs to be more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.
 - Lakewood should be a leader in sustainability.
- October 1, 2013: **Lakewood Innovates**. The purpose of the Lakewood Innovates open house was to solicit input on what type of economic development is important and appropriate for Lakewood in 2025; the type(s) of businesses and retail Lakewood should attract; and the types of services, programs, and infrastructure Lakewood should invest in to assist businesses.

Key concepts conveyed by the community:

- Lakewood has a number of economic development opportunities, especially near light rail, St. Anthony Hospital, and in deteriorating commercial areas.
 - Lakewood should invest in supporting local businesses.
 - Streetscape improvements are important.
 - There should be good integration between commercial and residential areas.
- October 15, 2013: **Lakewood Lives**. The Lakewood Lives open house provided an opportunity to gather information on how residents envisioned their neighborhoods in the year 2025 and how best to accommodate population growth, age diversity, sustainability, and the changing needs of the community. It was structured as a roundtable discussion based on four geographic areas of the city: north, south, east, and west. Participants were provided a series of questions and asked to identify on maps specific areas of opportunity or concern in their neighborhoods.

Key concepts conveyed by the community:

- Lakewood's park system and regional location are great assets.
- Residents generally feel safe in their neighborhoods.
- Underperforming commercial centers are a concern.
- Lakewood provides quality and diverse single-family housing choices.

- October 20, 2013: **Lakewood Moves**. The objective of the Lakewood Moves open house was to solicit comments from residents regarding mobility in the city, whether by car, bike, public transit, or on foot. Open house participants were presented with boards identifying the components of Complete Streets, roadway classifications of Lakewood streets, traffic volume information for major streets, and ideas for future transportation options such as car and bike share.

Key concepts conveyed by the community:

- Installing new and maintaining existing sidewalks is important.
 - Alternative modes of transportation to light rail stations are important.
 - The need to increase street capacity was identified equally as both a high priority and a low priority.
 - In general, streets are not bike or pedestrian friendly.
- November 12, 2013: **Lakewood Sustains**. The Lakewood Sustains open house provided educational information on topics including waste reduction, energy, climate change, and social and economic sustainability. Attendees had the opportunity to share ideas on how to make Lakewood a more sustainable city through a written survey and through interactive boards that demonstrated the interrelatedness of the broad range of sustainability-related topics.

Key concepts conveyed by the community:

- It is important for the City to address energy, air quality, and water efficiency.
 - Green building standards for new construction of City facilities is very important.
 - Waste diversion from landfills is important.
 - It is very important to increase residential curbside recycling rates.

Draft Plan Open Houses

Two community open houses were held on February 10 and 12, 2015, to receive input and comment on the draft goals and action steps contained in the Plan. In addition, City staff held drop-in office hours on February 13, 2015, for those who were unable to attend one of the two evening open houses. Approximately 60 individuals attended at least one of the public information meetings.

City Outreach

Throughout the process, a website was devoted to keeping the public up to date on the planning process, and to announce upcoming meetings and schedules. It also provided the opportunity for the public to provide input and respond to survey questions. Draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan were posted for the public to review and to provide comments on. Public announcements about upcoming open houses were in *Looking @ Lakewood* and the *Friday Report*. Staff attended numerous City Council ward meetings as well as neighborhood meetings to discuss the Plan update and inform residents on how to be involved.



Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee was convened in February 2014 to build on the community input received at the open houses and through the website. The Advisory Committee consisted of the Planning Commission, two resident representatives of each City Council ward, and one representative from each business association within the city. The committee met 17 times over the course of one year. It provided guidance and feedback to staff on the vision, guiding principles, goals, and action steps.

The agendas, meeting presentations, handouts, and meeting summaries were posted on the City's website. All Advisory Committee meetings were open to the public.



Public Hearings & Adoption Process

A public hearing before the Planning Commission was held on March 18, 2015. After review and discussion, Planning Commission unanimously adopted the Comprehensive Plan, *Lakewood 2025: Moving Forward Together*, and recommended approval of the Comprehensive Plan to the Lakewood City Council

A public hearing before the Lakewood City Council was held April 27, 2015. Approximately 15 members from the public provided comments at the hearing. After review and discussion, the Lakewood City Council approved the Comprehensive Plan, *Lakewood 2025: Moving Forward Together*.