
Community Meeting Notes Wednesday, February 4, 2026

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City of Lakewood Governance (Mayor Pro-tem / Councilmember Jeslin Shahrezaei)

- Annual Strategic Planning Retreat (Feb 6–7)
 - The Lakewood City Council meets annually for a focused retreat at the Heritage Lakewood facilities to move beyond day-to-day operations.
 - This retreat sets the strategic direction for the city's \$200 million+ annual budget and its 1,000+ full-time employees.
 - The session results in a two-year priority agenda that dictates city staff's work plans and funding allocations through December 2027.
 - This is the primary time for neighborhood-level projects (e.g., specific park or street lighting upgrades) to be officially prioritized for funding.
- April 7th Special Election on Zoning
 - The election centers on zoning updates approved by the Planning Commission and City Council in summer and fall 2025.
 - A "No" vote keeps the approved zoning updates; a "Yes" vote repeals them and reverts to previous development standards.
 - The outcome will determine the future of thousands of potential housing units currently in the development pipeline.
 - This is relevant because it represents a direct choice by residents on the future density and mixed-use character of Lakewood.
- Greenhouse Gas Benchmarking with DRCOG
 - Lakewood is partnering with the Denver Regional Council of Governments to establish a baseline for its goal of net neutrality by 2050.
 - The benchmarking study measures emissions across hundreds of commercial buildings and the city's transportation infrastructure.
 - These metrics will be used to draft the specific mandates and goals required to meet the city's 2030 and 2050 environmental targets.
 - This is the "scientific baseline" necessary to transform Lakewood into a leader for regional environmental health.

West Metro Fire Rescue Report (Gary Armstrong)

- Firefighter Academy and Staffing
 - WMFR must maintain a minimum daily staffing of 100 personnel across its 17 fire stations.
 - A new academy class of 24 firefighters is scheduled to graduate in May 2026.
 - These new hires will help the department manage over 40,000 annual service calls and reduce the burden on existing staff.
 - Chief Armstrong noted this is relevant because it is critical to maintaining response times within the 6-minute national safety standard.
- Public Safety: Lithium-Ion Battery Hazards
 - The department has identified a rising fire risk linked to the widespread use of e-mobility devices.

- There have been 3 battery-related fires in the last 6 weeks, with one involving a "homemade" battery configuration.
- The department is intensifying outreach to the thousands of Lakewood households that charge e-bikes and scooters indoors.
- These types of fires burn at over 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit, presenting a unique danger to multi-family apartment complexes.
- **Technological Advancement: Thermal Imaging Drones**
 - The fire department is ordering new drones to complement the police fleet.
 - Thermal cameras can detect heat anomalies and "hot spots" from an altitude of several hundred feet.
 - Commanders can identify internal fire locations minutes faster than through manual thermal checks.
 - This creates a "safety shield" for entering crews by predicting structural collapses or hidden fire paths.

Jefferson County Commissioner Report (Andy Kerr)

- **Severe Weather Response Program (SWRP)**
 - The county activates emergency services when temperatures drop to 20°F (Severe) or 10°F (Extreme).
 - By Feb 2nd, the county had 17 activation days and issued 3,219 motel vouchers to the unhoused population.
 - These vouchers provided over 3,000 safe nights of sleep, preventing a likely spike in local cold-exposure fatalities.
 - This the county's primary "life-safety tool" during harsh winter conditions.
- **Infrastructure: Road and Bridge Mill Levy**
 - The county restored a dedicated tax stream specifically to address a backlog of road maintenance.
 - This funding has allowed for the resurfacing of dozens of lane-miles across both urban and mountain corridors.
 - The mill levy supports "full-depth" reclamation, which extends road life by up to 10 years longer than standard overlays.
 - This addresses the most common resident complaint regarding the deteriorating quality of Lakewood's road network.
- **Funding Risk: Federal HR1 Legislation**
 - Potential changes to federal work requirements and funding formulas threaten the county's budget.
 - The county faces a potential \$10 million shortfall in its Human Services department.
 - This could negatively impact programs like TANF and childcare assistance (CCAP) for thousands of low-income families.
 - This risks forcing working parents out of the labor market if they lose childcare support.

Lakewood Police Technology (RTCC & DFR) (Sergeant TJ Jacobson)

- **Drone as First Responder (DFR) Efficiency**
 - Drones provide real-time aerial intelligence to the Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC) pilot.
 - Drones arrive on scene 77% to 80% of the time before ground units; 41% of calls were cleared by a drone pilot alone during the pilot phase.
 - This technology saved over 100 hours of patrol agent time in its first three months, keeping officers available for emergency calls.
 - This functions as a "force multiplier," effectively adding capacity without the high cost of new full-time officers.



- The Fusus Unified Data Platform
 - Fusus integrates body cameras, 911 dispatch, and video into a single interface.
 - The RTCC manages 634 available city video streams and 100 AI-empowered feeds.
 - The system provides live, turn-by-turn intelligence to officers' phones, reducing response times by seconds or minutes.
 - This removes the "information gap" that occurs between a 911 call and an agent's arrival on scene.
- Community Connect and Camera Registration (see website)
 - This initiative allows the public to voluntarily partner with the police department's technology grid.
 - Businesses can register their camera locations for free or pay a fee for full live integration during emergencies.
 - The program can add hundreds of private camera feeds to the city's safety grid at no capital cost to the taxpayers.
 - This allows the RTCC to act as a "virtual witness" during crimes, providing immediate evidence for faster arrests.
- During the meeting, it was announced that Commander Alden has been recently promoted to his current rank. Tom Quinn highlighted the importance of having three commanders present (Caster, Buchan, and Alden), which underscores the department's commitment to senior-level oversight within the Alameda Corridor.

Community Spotlight: Kaiser Permanente (Teri Romero, Kaiser Permanente)

- Sustainable Infrastructure at Alameda
 - The new facility replaces an outdated building from 1972.
 - Solar panels generate 50% of the building's energy, and the structure is LEED Gold certified.
 - The building will save thousands of dollars in annual utilities, directing more resources toward patient care.
 - Kaiser's "commitment to the neighborhood's long-term health," as a sustainable facility contributes to a healthier local environment.
- Integrated Social Health Care
 - Kaiser is screening patients for the "social determinants" that affect their overall wellness.
 - 100% of patients are screened for food, housing, and transportation needs during their medical visits.
 - Flagged patients receive immediate, on-site referrals to nonprofits, providing a seamless safety net for Lakewood residents.
 - Medical treatment only accounts for 20% of a person's health; the remaining 80% is driven by these social factors.
- A new mural by a local artist has been installed at the Kaiser facility with a grant from the Alameda Corridor BID.
 - The mural is designed with a specific section that illuminates at night, making it visible to anyone driving through Lakewood after dark.
 - Teri Romero offered to host private group tours for anyone interested in seeing the new facility's aesthetic and functional upgrades. An "aesthetically pleasing" environment is medically relevant because it positively impacts the recovery and mental well-being of patients.



Alameda Connects & Infrastructure

- **Discover Alameda App:** The community is encouraged to utilize the mobile app (available on Apple and Google) which uses geofencing to notify users about public art and historical sites as they walk the corridor.
- **Colorado 150 / US 250 Celebration:**
 - The state is launching a marketing campaign for the semi-sesquicentennial.
 - Local businesses and nonprofits can apply to have their events included in the state's database and receive a marketing toolkit.
 - Rachel Griffin is coordinating with the state to ensure Alameda's historical tour is officially recognized in the celebration.
 - The "Blarney on Belmar" event has already been successfully added to the state's registry.

Announced Community Events (added to comprehensive calendar below)

- **Business After Hours (Wednesday, Feb 7):** Hosted by Spay Today and Crimson Cat at the West Chamber Office (1667 Cole Blvd). This is a dog-friendly event featuring a photo booth. A \$20 donation is suggested for the "Spay Forward Fund" to help low-income families with pet vaccinations. Non-chamber members can attend by contacting Myra for a special registration code.
- **Rocky Mountain Punk Grand Opening:** Scheduled for February 13th through 15th.
- **Spay Today Event:** Taking place at on February 23rd.
- **Blarney on Belmar (Saturday, Mar 7):** AC and Belmar will host this event at Belmar Plaza.
- **Bunny Trails:** Scheduled for Saturday, April 4th at Belmar.
- **Inaugural Kentucky Derby Celebration:** Belmar will host its first-ever live airing and celebration of the Kentucky Derby.
- **The Action Center Annual Gala:** The "New Frontiers" themed gala is set for Thursday, May 14th, at the Seawell Ballroom.
- **Belmar Summer Concert Series:** This series is scheduled to begin in June.

Economic Development & Grants

- **Business Safety and Security Grants:** These city-funded grants have reopened. Notably, the previous matching requirement has been removed, providing "free money" for local businesses to improve surveillance.
- **Community Grant Program:** This program is currently open for nonprofits, though the application deadline is approaching rapidly.
- **New Business Developments:**
 - **Badass Coffee:** Recently held its grand opening on the previous Saturday.
 - **One Up Arcade:** Will be moving into a portion of the former bowling alley later this year.
 - **K-Pot (Korean Barbecue):** Expected to open in the Belmar area later this year.
 - **Tru Barber Shops:** Mentioned as a new business coming to the area.
 - **Chuze Fitness:** Listed as an upcoming or new community addition.

Non-Profit & Partner Updates

- **The Action Center:** Official ownership of the Emory property was secured on December 31st, with construction beginning mid-January.
 - Major interior construction is occurring at the current campus to move Family Services into the Clothing Bank building. This move is designed to streamline services for rental and utility assistance and financial navigation.



- **Belmar Marketing:** A direct mail initiative will hit 15,000 households between April 9th and 11th to promote spring activities.
- **Information Access:** Physical flyers and QR codes for the monthly economic development newsletter are available in the back of the meeting room. Full PowerPoint presentations and AI-generated bulleted transcripts are posted to the website and newsletter at the end of each week.

VI. K-8 Expeditionary Learning Charter School Application

- Jen Norris is submitting an application for a new K-8 public charter school. This is the first external charter applicant in Jefferson County in 11 years.
- The school is proposed to be located at 11th and Holland.
- If approved, the school will provide a new "Expeditionary Learning" educational model for families in the West Central Lakewood area starting in 2027.

Community Calendar of Events

- Lakewood Community Grant Program: Open to nonprofits. The application window is Feb. 1 – March 31, 2026 (5:00 PM).
- Youth Program Grant: Applications open March 1 – April 1, 2026 (5:00 PM). Up to \$50,000 is available for qualifying youth-centric programs.
- Business Safety & Security Grants: Reissued with no matching requirement for 2026. Businesses can apply for funds to install cameras, lighting, and alarms.
- Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA): Pre-applications open Feb. 9 – Feb. 11, 2026.

Date(s)	Event / Milestone	Location
Jan 6 – Jan 4, 2027	Building History Exhibition: Year-long outdoor visual history.	Heritage Lakewood
Jan 17 – Feb 28	Red Rocks Student Art Showcase: Multimedia student gallery.	Cultural Center
Jan 20 – Oct 31	Volunteers & Birds Live Here: Ongoing hallway exhibitions.	Heritage Lakewood
Jan 23	Artist Reception: Public reception (6–8 PM).	Cultural Center
Early Feb	Navigation Center Grand Opening: New facility launch.	
Feb 4	Alameda Connects Community Meeting: Morning session.	West Metro Fire Admin

Feb 4 – 28	Words Matter: The Langston Hughes Project (North Gallery).	Cultural Center
Feb 5	West Metro Chamber "Business After Hours": Dog-friendly networking.	1667 Cole Blvd
Feb 5–8	Hello, Dolly!: Musical performance by CCU.	Cultural Center
Feb 7	PossAbilities Expo: Disability community resource fair.	Whitlock Rec Center
Feb 8	Super Bowl of Dips Competition	Yield Public House
Feb 9 – 23	Monday Mile Challenge: Resident wellness logging.	Citywide / Parks
Feb 11	Parks Jobs Open House: Seasonal hiring session.	Bear Creek Lake Park
Feb 11	BCP National Initiative Luncheon	AC Shared Offices
Feb 12	AC Monthly Meeting: Topic: Real-Time Crime Reporting & Drones.	TBD
Feb 13–15	Rocky Mountain Punk Grand Opening: Multi-day celebration.	Business Site
Feb 13–22	South Pacific: Musical performance series.	Cultural Center
Feb 14	The Secret Garden: Missoula Children's Theatre (1:00 & 3:30).	Cultural Center
Feb 14	Senator Michael Bennet Meet & Greet	Yield (Oak St.)
Feb 16	Presidents Day: City Hall closed; Rec centers open holiday hours.	All City Admin
Feb 17	Ward 3 Community Meeting	Lakewood Social House
Feb 19	Kings Return: A cappella quartet performance.	Cultural Center

Feb 23	Spay Today @ Notre Dame	Notre Dame
Feb 26	The Beatles Songbook: Colorado Jazz Repertory Orchestra.	Cultural Center
Feb 28	Jazz Concert: Ron McCurdy Quartet ("Ask Your Mama").	Cultural Center
Late Feb	Sustainability Rollout: Expansion of composting program.	Citywide
Mar 2 (Starts)	Lakewood Tree Sale: Resident low-cost tree distribution.	Online / Greenhouse
Mar 4	Alameda Connects Meeting: Morning session.	West Metro Fire Admin
Mar 7	Blarney on Belmar: Signature community celebration.	Belmar Plaza
Mar 13–29	A Chorus Line: Professional theater co-production.	Cultural Center
Mar 18	Parks Volunteer Open House: Information on trail work.	Bear Creek Lake Park
Apr 1	Alameda Connects Meeting: Morning session.	West Metro Fire Admin
Apr 4	Bunny Trails: Seasonal event.	Belmar
Apr 7	Special Election Day: Zoning ordinance vote.	Citywide
Apr 9–11	Belmar Spring Direct Mail: Outreach hitting 15k homes.	Belmar Area
Apr 10	San Jose Taiko: Traditional Japanese drumming.	Cultural Center
Apr 25	Earth Day Volunteer Project: Cleanup and native planting.	Citywide Parks
Apr 25	Luca Stricagnoli: World-renowned acoustic guitarist.	Cultural Center
May 2	Trout Fishing Tournament: Competitive angling.	Big Soda Lake

May 2 & 9	Free Mulch Pickup: loader assistance provided.	City Greenhouse
May 4	Kentucky Derby Celebration: Live airing at Belmar.	Belmar
May 6	Alameda Connects Meeting: Morning session.	West Metro Fire Admin
May 8	Active Adult Resource Fair: Vendors for ages 55+.	Clements Center
May 9	Car No. 25 Open House: 1911 electric trolley rides.	Heritage Lakewood
May 14	The Action Center Annual Gala: "New Frontiers" fundraiser.	Seawell Ballroom
May 15–16	Lakewood Symphony Orchestra: Season finale.	Cultural Center
June – August	"Sounds Exciting!" Summer Concert Series	Heritage Lakewood
Jun 3	Alameda Connects Meeting: Morning session.	West Metro Fire Admin
Jun 6	Rockin' Block Party: Festival, food trucks, outdoor movie.	Belmar Park
Jun 6 – Aug 29	Summer Fitness in the Park: Free Saturday morning classes.	Rotating Parks
Jun 19–21	Let's Go Camping: Introductory gear-provided weekend.	Bear Creek Lake Park
Oct 3–4	Lakewood Cider Days: Signature fall festival.	Belmar Park
Late 2026	Grand Openings: K-Pot Korean BBQ and One Up Arcade.	Belmar
Fall 2027	New Expeditionary Learning Charter School Opening	11th and Holland