



Fall 2024

lakewood

connections

TRUCK & TRACTOR DAY IS OCT. 12

Head to Fort Steilacoom Park for free pumpkins
and family fun, 12-3 p.m. Pages 14-15



INSIDE

- Council Corner: Engaging youth in local government
- Don't miss our end of year events
- Big park improvements planned





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Jason Whalen
Mayor



Mary Moss
Deputy Mayor



Patti Belle
Councilmember



Paul Bocchi
Councilmember



Mike Brandstetter
Councilmember



J. Trestin Lauricella
Councilmember

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Ryan Pearson
Councilmember

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Email: PoliceFrontDesk@CityOfLakewood.us

Online: [CityOfLakewood.us/Police](https://www.cityoflakewood.us/Police)

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CITY COUNCIL CORNER

Empowering today's youth

Lakewood's support of its youngest residents runs deep, with roots connected to some of the city's earliest elected leaders. The Lakewood Youth Council was established to empower youth and give them a seat at the table of local government.

Today, more than 20 years after the first Lakewood Youth Council was formed, the volunteer board continues to play a crucial role in fostering civic engagement among young residents. The Lakewood Youth Council is composed of high school students who live in Lakewood. Its mission is to provide a youth voice in city affairs, advise the Lakewood City Council on issues affecting young people, and help organize community events and initiatives. Members of the Lakewood Youth Council also serve as liaisons on the city's other advisory boards and commissions to provide a youth voice among other city volunteers.

Engaging youths in local government empowers them by giving them a platform to express their opinions and ideas on issues that directly impact their lives. This can include education, public safety and recreational activities. This involvement helps to ensure that the perspectives of younger generations are considered in the decision-making process by city leaders.



Members of the 2024-2025 Lakewood Youth Council.

Serving on the Youth Council offers a valuable educational experience for members. Youths receive a firsthand understanding of how local government functions, the complexities of policymaking, and the importance of civic participation. The hope is this will inspire youths to pursue future careers in public service and create informed, engaged residents. Annually Lakewood Youth Council members recommend one of their own to be nominated for a scholarship from the Association of Washington Cities. Historically, Lakewood-nominated students have received this state-level scholarship at a higher rate than their peers. They exemplify the high quality students we have in our community.

Organizing events and initiatives, while participating in volunteer opportunities, cultural celebrations and awareness campaigns, fosters

a sense of community and civic responsibility. It can lead to increased engagement in city events among their families and peers. And it demonstrates the power of youth involvement to the broader community.

The City of Lakewood's Youth Council is a vital initiative that provides young adults with a voice in local government and cultivates a generation of engaged, informed citizens who understand the importance of civic participation. By involving young people in governance, Lakewood is investing in its future leaders and creating a more inclusive and representative community.

As a City Council, we are excited to see what ideas our 2024-2025 Youth Council members share and continue to be impressed with the success stories of former Youth Council members.

Located on the shore of American Lake, the 5-acre American Lake Park has beach access, a boat launch, docks, playground, picnic space, restrooms and shelter. The city is adding improvements to the park to make it more accessible.



Under construction: American Lake Park

Shortly after Labor Day, work began at American Lake Park, making it more accessible to visitors and upgrading some existing features. Construction is expected to be completed before summer of 2025.

The boat launch will remain open during construction; however, the park will be closed to the public in active

- construction areas for safety purposes.
- The city is investing \$4.2 million in the 5-acre, lakefront park. Improvements include:
- Building an ADA accessible route to the beach.
 - Replacing existing retaining walls and bulkhead.
 - A new restroom facility and picnic shelter.
 - Widening stair access to the beach.
 - Adding a new entry plaza

- between the restrooms and playground.
- Landscape improvements at the entrance, parking lot and along the shoreline.
 - Playground upgrades, including the addition of a “We-Go-Round” accessible piece of play equipment.
 - New trash enclosure, trash cans and other park amenities.

Lakewood was awarded \$1.32 million in grant allocations to help fund the improvements.

WARDS LAKE PARK IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE

Construction is anticipated to begin before the end of this year at Wards Lake Park, a 38-acre site located off 84th and Pine Streets. Improvements will provide new recreational opportunities while protecting the oak prairie, old growth forest and wetland areas.

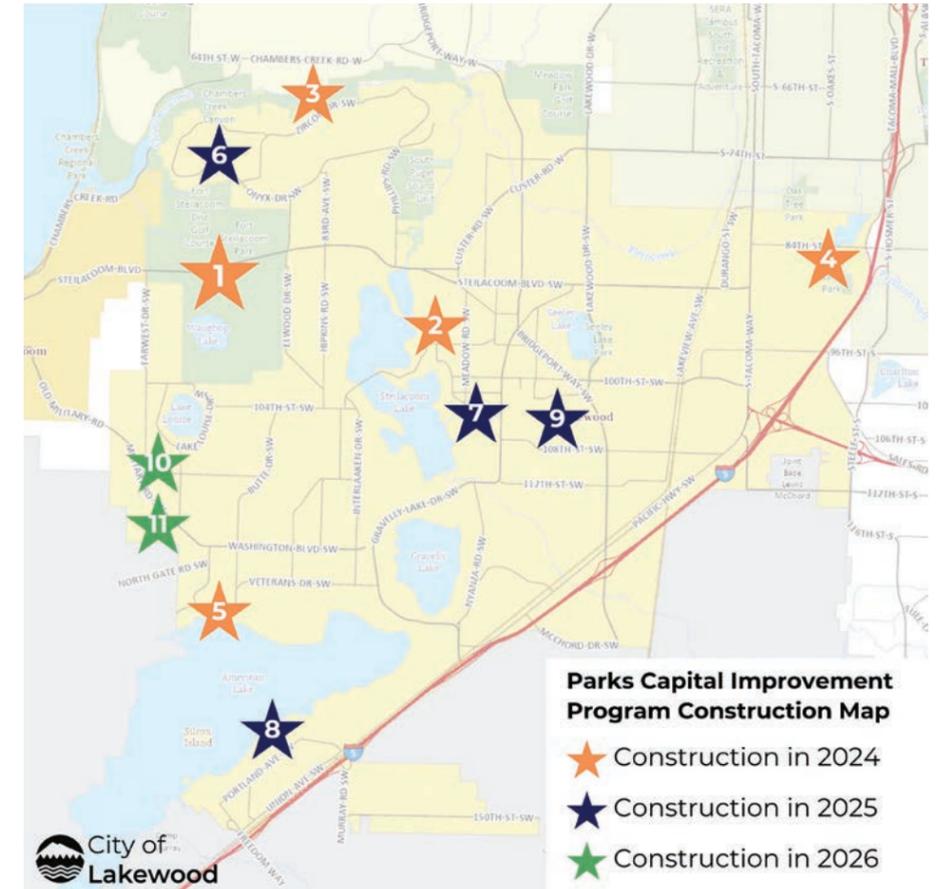
Improvements on the north side of the park include:

- ADA accessible loop trail with a 170-foot-long bridge over the lake.
- 10-foot-wide paved and gravel paths.
- A new playground and picnic shelter.
- A pump bike track.
- New restroom facility.
- Prairie restoration and a bird blind overlooking the lake.
- Public art and landscape improvements near the entry.
- Parking lot expansion.

Additional improvements at the south end of the park include:

- New off-leash dog park.
- 3-acre bike track and skills area.
- New neighborhood park and playground at 25th Ave. Ct South.
- Trail improvements throughout the site.
- Landscape improvements.

Improvements along 88th Street South adjacent to the park include accessible parking for the dog park and the addition of sidewalks and trailhead improvements. The project cost is estimated at \$6 million. The city secured just over \$4.2 million in grant funding to help pay for this community investment.

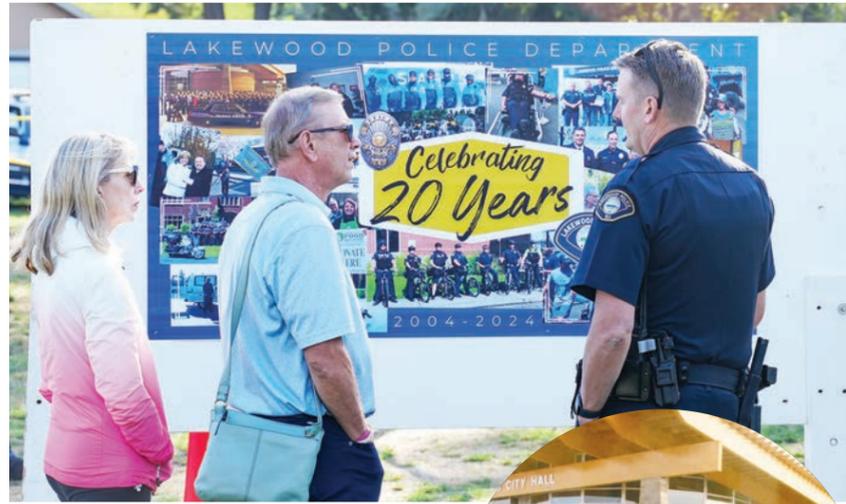


CITY OF LAKEWOOD PARKS CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

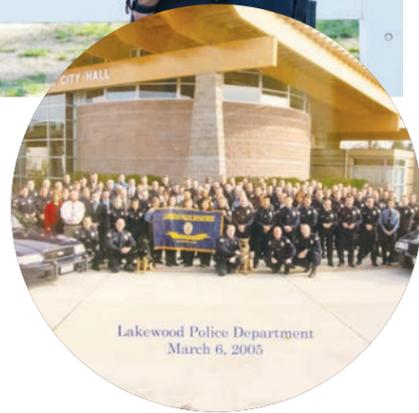
Projects completed in 2024, or that are still to come either this year, 2025 and 2026.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. FORT STEILACOOM PARK
Turf infield improvements, Pierce College home field (completed spring 2024)</p> <p>2. EDGEWATER PARK
Master Plan update adopted (spring 2024)</p> <p>3. CHAMBERS CREEK TRAIL
Phase 2 trail extension underway (2024-2025)</p> <p>4. WARDS LAKE
Phase 1 & 2, construction anticipated this winter (2024-2025)</p> <p>5. AMERICAN LAKE PARK
Improvements construction September (2024-2025)</p> | <p>6. OAKBROOK PARK
improvements (2025)</p> <p>7. PRIMLEY PARK
playground replacement (2025)</p> <p>8. HARRY TODD PARK
Pickleball Courts & park maintenance (2025)</p> <p>9. DOWNTOWN PARK
Planning (2025)</p> <p>10. LAKE LOUISE ELEMENTARY
Playground replacement (2026)</p> <p>11. WASHINGTON PARK
playground replacement (2026)</p> |
|--|---|

Making a difference



The Lakewood Police Department celebrated its 20th anniversary in August 2024. The department formed eight years after Lakewood incorporated. Four police chiefs have served the department: Chief Larry Saunders, Chief Bret Farrar, Chief Mike Zaro and current Chief Patrick D. Smith. Many of the police officers who started with the department stayed in Lakewood, accomplishing successful law enforcement careers before retiring.



Top: Lakewood police Assistant Chief John Unfred talks with Lakewood residents at the department's 20th anniversary celebration. Above: The first year of the department.

Congrats 2024 Citizen Academy graduates

A new round of graduates was celebrated this summer after completing the Lakewood Police Department Citizens Academy. This annual course is an opportunity for residents to learn about police operations firsthand from Lakewood officers, detectives and command staff.



LPD Fallen Officer Food Drive & Blood Drive

This year's food drive to benefit Emergency Food Network and blood drive to support Bloodworks NW is 6 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Dec. 5. People are encouraged to bring nonperishable food items to the Lakewood Police Station, 9401 Lakewood Drive SW, and drop them off with our volunteers who will be collecting items throughout the day. You can also drop off nonperishable food at collection bins around the community leading up to the event.

The blood drive is also at the station, happening from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appointment only. As we get closer to December, look for more information about how to get involved on the City's website CityofLakewood.us, or Lakewood Police Department's social media channels.

National Night Out 2024



Thank you to all our neighbors who came together Aug. 6 to help us recognize National Night Out against crime. Our police officers, first responders and Lakewood City Council members enjoyed visiting the various neighborhoods and getting time to meet and talk with our neighbors.

SAVE THE DATE

Sign up for 2025 National Night Out on Aug. 5 at CityofLakewood.us/national-night-out/



STAY INFORMED WITH LAKEWOOD ALERT

Sign up to receive alerts and notifications through our Lakewood Alert system. This system is used for emergency notifications and periodic emails or text messages about special events, road closure alerts or other announcements.

Subscribe: Scan the QR code or visit CityofLakewood.us/Lakewood-Alert

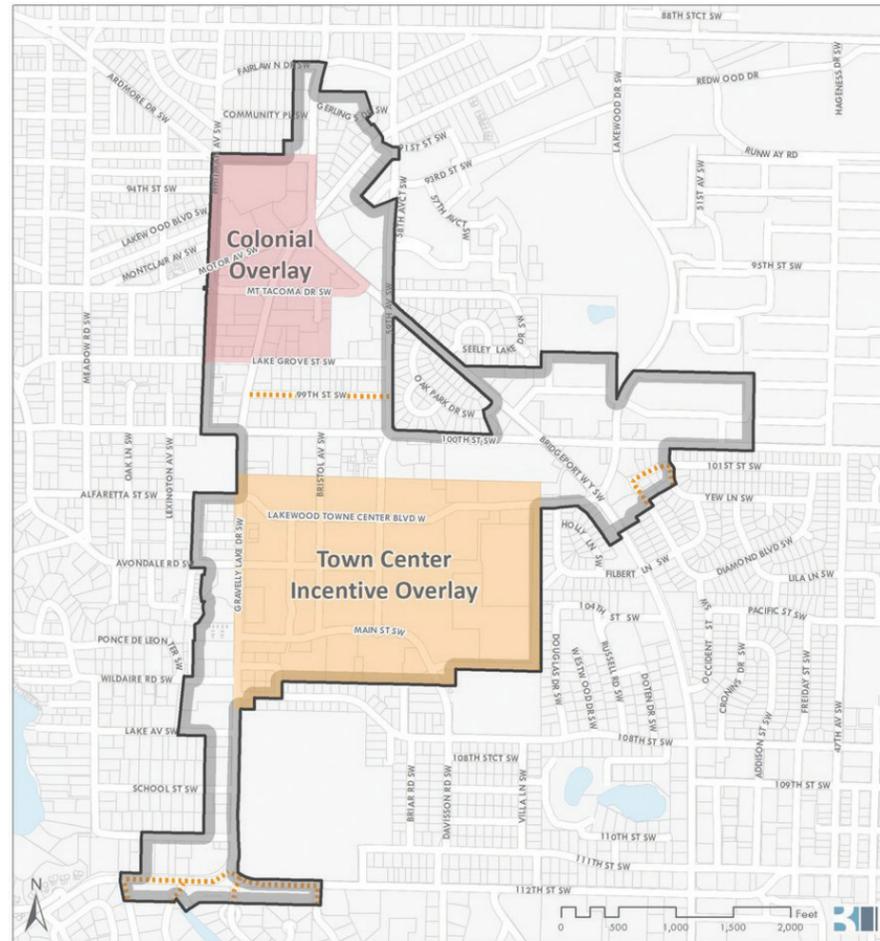
Shaping a vision for downtown Lakewood

This summer the City of Lakewood learned it was the recipient of a \$1.1 million federal RAISE grant.

The RAISE grant can only be used to pay for planning and preconstruction activities. The city will use it to create a plan that includes updated recommendations for how to develop its downtown area with a focus on the area's transportation network. Lakewood's downtown is a 300-acre commercial center identified in the adopted Downtown Subarea Plan. The Lakewood Towne Center, Colonial Plaza and neighboring commercial centers to the east comprise this area. It is designated as a place to add significant housing and job growth over the next 20 years.

With the grant award, the city will examine its existing and currently planned transportation network downtown. This includes multimodal transportation options, or planning for various modes of travel including walking, cycling, driving and public transportation. The grant allows the city to update its priorities for these needed improvements based on current information and projected growth.

Being the recipient of this grant is a major achievement



“ The Lakewood City Council is dedicated to redeveloping and reenergizing the city’s downtown core with a goal of making it a destination. ”

for the city. The Lakewood City Council has pursued this line of funding for years. U.S. Rep. Marilyn Strickland was instrumental in the city receiving the award. Lakewood extends its thanks to the congresswoman for her continued support and advocacy.

The Lakewood City Council is dedicated to redeveloping and reenergizing the city's downtown core with a goal of making it a destination. This includes a City Council priority to develop a downtown "green street loop." As proposed, the loop will be a transformational piece to increase quality spaces for pedestrian and nonvehicular traffic and connect to public gathering spaces. Combined, all these pieces will create a vibrant commercial center that ultimately will incentivize private investment.

This initial grant award positions Lakewood to apply for a future RAISE construction grant, which can range between \$20-\$30 million. If awarded the construction grant, the city would use the money to build the recommendations from the report.

The city's preconstruction report is expected by late 2026.



Photo credit: Tacoma Public Utilities

Featured road improvements: Steilacoom Boulevard

This fall work will begin to improve Steilacoom Boulevard from Weller Road to 87th Ave SW at Fort Steilacoom Park. This \$6 million road improvement project will add sidewalks and bike lanes and make improvements to curbs, gutter, existing sidewalks, turn lanes, add improved street lighting and a road overlay.

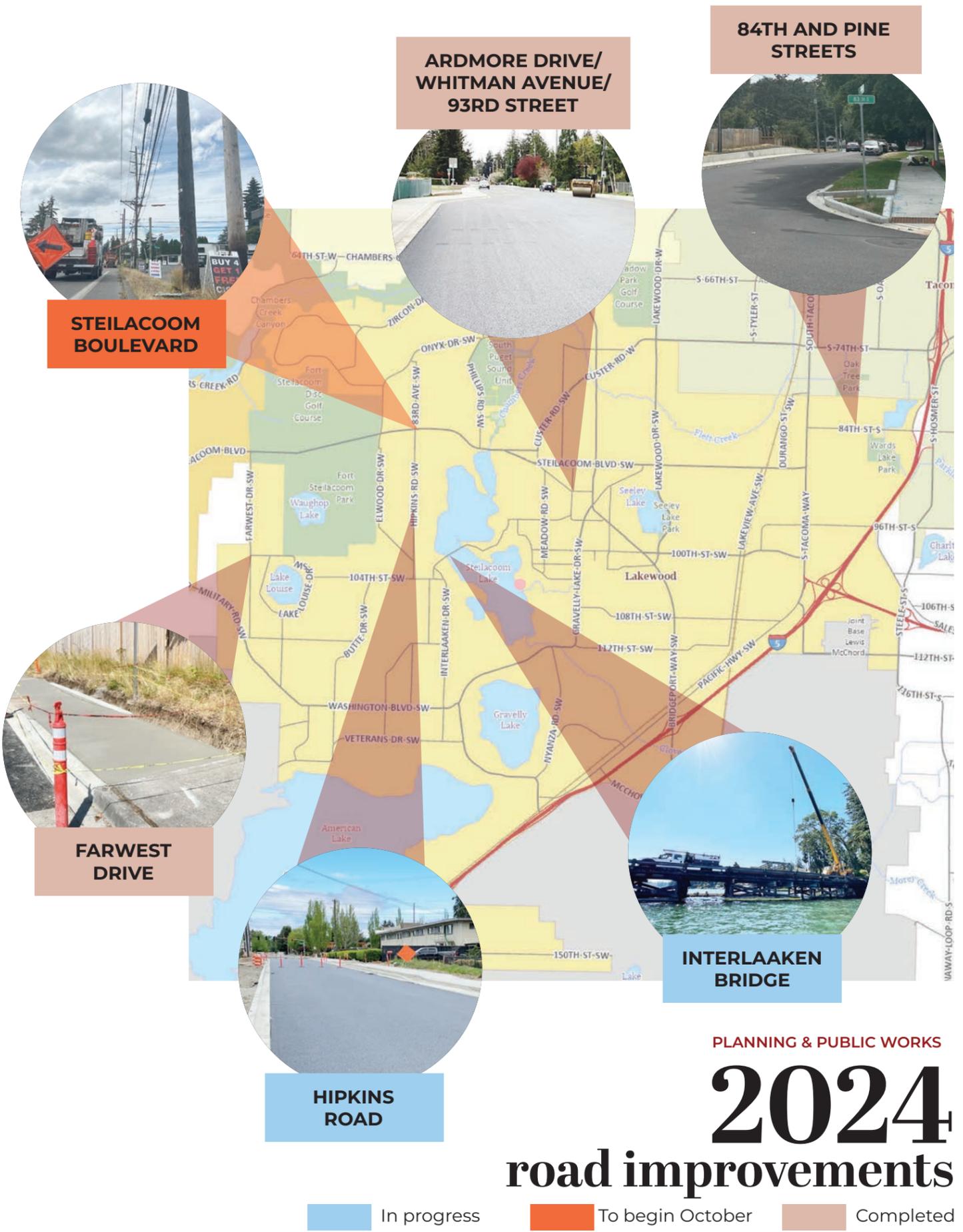
Leading up to the work Tacoma Public Utilities replaced 38 utility poles in the project area. With the construction drivers can expect all-day lane closures over an extended period so the work can be performed safely.

Once complete the project will tie into previous improvements made on Steilacoom Boulevard that focused on pedestrian safety and connect sidewalks through this busy commercial corridor.

UPCOMING ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Work is planned on the following projects between the end of 2024 and 2025:

- South Tacoma Way overlay: 88th Street SW to north city limits
- South Tacoma Way overlay: 96th Street SW to Steilacoom Blvd SW
- Rose Road/Forest/Fern sewer extension
- Wadsworth/Silcox/Boat sewer extension
- Steilacoom Boulevard: 87th Avenue SW to Weller Road improvements
- 112th Street SW and Idlewild Road SW improvements
- Annual asphalt patching
- Annual chip seal



PLANNING & PUBLIC WORKS

2024 road improvements

■ In progress
 ■ To begin October
 ■ Completed

BUSINESS SHOWCASE

Emergency Food Network

Emergency Food Network (EFN) has operated for 40 years — 30 of those years in Lakewood. In that time, EFN has provided tens of millions of pounds of food to over 75 food pantries across Pierce County.

EFN and the City of Lakewood have strengthened their partnership throughout the years. The Lakewood City Council allocated \$750,000 in federal American Rescue Plan Act funds to Emergency Food Network for the construction of a new food storage warehouse in Lakewood. The City Council earmarked another \$250,000 in ARPA monies, contingent on EFN raising additional funding, for the project.

Along with addressing food insecurity across Pierce County through its food distribution, CEO Michelle Douglas said she is proud the nonprofit can offer culturally relevant meals to all local food pantries.

“We want to make sure that people are getting food that is not only nutritionally dense and good for them, but is reflective of who they are in the community,” Douglas said.

Thousands of people in Lakewood and surrounding areas would not have access to a reliable food source without the work of EFN, its staff and volunteers.

Emergency Food Network was recognized by the Lakewood City Council as the May 2024 Business Showcase-Nonprofit Edition for its community-focused mission and longevity in the community.



The Lakewood City Council awarded Emergency Food Network the May Business Showcase at City Council meeting this spring.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDING BY CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY AREAS

Category	Funds Obligated
Children's Programs	\$ 787,316.50
City Hall Upgrades	\$ 1,603,213.00
Community Programs	\$ 54,950.00
Food Banks	\$ 3,000,000.00
Housing & Homelessness	\$ 3,367,850.00
Land Use Planning	\$ 135,000.00
Parks & Green Space	\$ 1,332,525.00
Public Health	\$ 3,133.00
Public Safety	\$ 1,709,989.00
Workforce Development	\$ 572,143.00
RPA Administrative Costs	\$ 545,812.00
TOTAL	\$ 13,111,931.50

STAY UP ON BUSINESS NEWS

Want to know the latest on economic development in the city of Lakewood? Sign up to receive an e-newsletter every other month from the city's Economic Development team. Scan the QR code to sign up to receive the newsletter or visit [Bit.ly/LakewoodEconomicNews](https://bit.ly/LakewoodEconomicNews).



Lakewood receives recognition for excellence in financial reporting

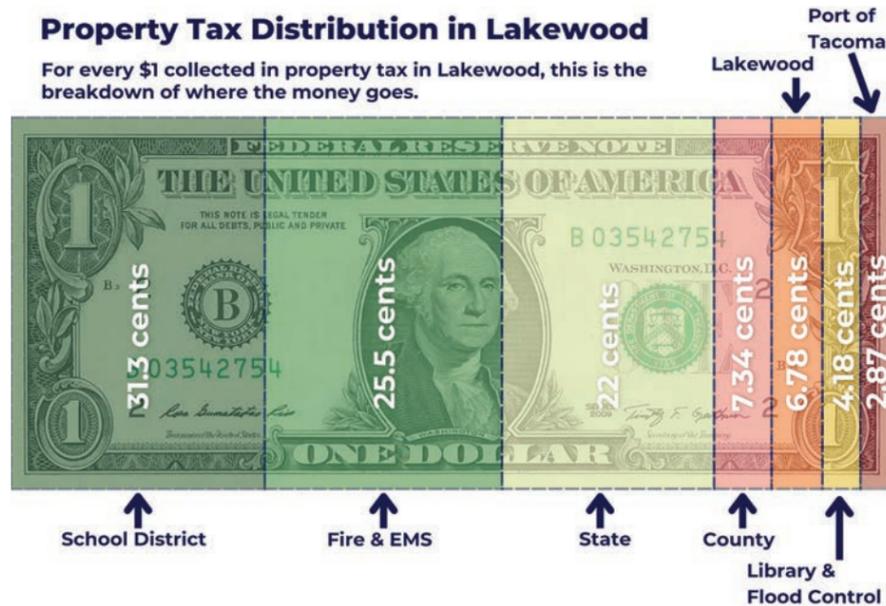
The City of Lakewood is on a winning streak. Every year, for more than a decade, the city has been nationally recognized for its financial reporting.

The most recent recognition was announced this year by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). The organization awarded Lakewood with its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the city's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and its Popular Annual Financial Reporting award.

Lakewood also received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award.

With these three awards, the city earned the prestigious triple crown recognition.

These awards are the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. They represent a significant accomplishment by a local government and its management. They also showcase the work by a local government to have "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate a financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the financial documents.



“Receipt of this award places the City of Lakewood in very small company as less than 2% of governments nationally and statewide receive this award.”

Lakewood will continue to produce this report and submit it yearly to GFOA to determine its eligibility for another certificate.

“Receiving this prestigious accolade is a testament to

the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our finance team, led by Deputy City Manager Tho Kraus, and is a positive reflection of the unwavering commitment to transparency, accuracy and excellence in our financial reporting by our finance team, city employees and the Lakewood City Council,” said Lakewood City Manager John Caulfield.

“This recognition brings honor and recognition, not just to our finance team, but also our entire organization and underscores the critical role they all play in our success,” he said. “Receipt of this award places the City of Lakewood in very small company as less than 2% of governments nationally and statewide receive this award.”



Photo credit: Steve Dunkelberger

Volunteers with the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association gather in front of the largest surviving buildings from the original fort. This photo from 2021 shows the association's Christmas at Fort Steilacoom, a living history reenactment.

Learn Lakewood's role in 175 years of U.S. Army history

Contributed by the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association

This year marks a key moment in Washington State's history, and it started right here in Lakewood: the 175th anniversary of the U.S. Army's arrival in Puget Sound.

Fort Steilacoom was established in August 1849 as the region's first U.S. military post.

Fort Steilacoom played a critical role in shaping Washington Territory. Officers stationed here would go on to serve in major battles during the U.S. Civil War, connecting our local history to the nation's broader story. The fort remained active during the war, helping ensure Washington stayed with the Union. After the fort closed in 1868, its buildings became the state's first mental health facility in 1871.

Today, four original fort

buildings still stand around the former parade grounds, now the front lawn of Western State Hospital. These buildings are preserved and maintained entirely by volunteers, serving as a museum. Unlike similar sites, the fort isn't part of a state or national park. Thanks to the dedication of volunteers, visitors can explore the same rooms once walked by Civil War soldiers and learn about the fort's complex history. Volunteers are working hard to share the diverse perspectives of everyone who interacted with the fort.

If you appreciate history, consider volunteering or supporting the fort. Visit the museum's website (HistoricFortSteilacoom.org) and Facebook page (Facebook.com/HistoricFortSteilacoom) to learn more about Fort Steilacoom's impact on our community and the Pacific Northwest.

WELCOME TO YOUR INTERIM LAKEWOOD PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY

Contributed by Pierce County Library System

Your Pierce County Library System looks forward to seeing you soon at the interim Lakewood Pierce County Library. The interim Lakewood Library will serve you seven days a week at 10202 Gravelly Lake Drive SW. The full service library is a multi-generational center for learning and enjoyment for the Lakewood community.

The 7,500-square-foot library offers learning resources and classes for all ages; delivers books, materials, and events for enjoyment; and provides community meeting spaces to gather. Come visit and:

- Choose from 20,000 copies of books, movies and magazines or place a hold on any of the more than 600,000 books and movies in the Library System and pick it up at Lakewood Library.
- Enjoy classes and events from story times, STEAM classes and a teen advisory council to book clubs and computer and technology classes.
- Conduct research, do homework or just have fun on one of the 18 computers.
- Reserve space for meetings and connecting in the community meeting room, with space for up to 36 people.

Lakewood Library staff looks forward to seeing you soon!

For more information: mypcls.org/lakewood-pierce-county-library/.



City of Lakewood fall/winter events

**Truck
& Tractor
Day,
Oct. 12**

TRUCK & TRACTOR DAY

12-3 p.m. | Oct. 12

Fort Steilacoom Park

Take a free hayride, climb aboard giant trucks, tractors, buses and fire trucks. This free, favorite fall festival is the perfect chance to build memories with your family.

LAKWOOD WELLNESS PROGRAMMING

Fall semester: Oct. 29-Dec. 17

The Pavilion at Fort Steilacoom Park

As we head into fall plug back into a routine by signing up for the City of Lakewood recreational programming focused on well-being. Offerings range from various



**Annual
tree
lighting,
Dec. 7**



**Jingle
Bell
run/walk,
Dec. 14**

yoga styles to Tai Chi, with classes for people of all ages and skill levels. Find a full class list and register online: CityofLakewood.us/Recreation-Programs

FALLEN OFFICER FOOD & BLOOD DRIVE

6 a.m.-5:30 p.m. | Dec. 5

Lakewood police station

Drop off nonperishable food items, monetary donations or sign up to donate blood for this annual event held by the Lakewood Police Department to benefit Emergency Food Network and Bloodworks NW. The blood drive portion of the event is 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appointment.

HOLIDAY PARADE OF LIGHTS & TREE LIGHTING

4:30-6 p.m. | Dec. 7

Lakewood City Hall

6000 Main St SW

Kick off your holidays in Lakewood at our Holiday Parade of Lights and annual Tree Lighting. Join the community parade to showcase your business or

group, line the parade route and visit Santa. Want to be part of the fun? Parade applications are online at CityofLakewood.us/Holiday-Parade.

JINGLE BELL 1-MILE KID'S DASH & 5K RUN/WALK

9:30 a.m. | Dec. 14

Fort Steilacoom Park

This 5k walk/run and 1-mile kids fun run is great for families. Wear your best holiday-themed costume, bring your dog (on a leash), grab the stroller and head to Fort Steilacoom Park for holiday cheer. Registration will open in the fall.

MLK WELCOME WALK FOR OUR BELOVED COMMUNITY

Save the date: Jan. 11, 2025

Fort Steilacoom Park

Help us celebrate community and the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at this event focused on fellowship, community building and supporting each other. Look for more event details to come at the end of 2024. Website: CityofLakewood.us/MLK-Day

FALL COMMUNITY CLEANUP

Bring trash, junk and recyclables to the Lakewood Transfer Station for the city's Fall Community Cleanup Saturday, Nov. 9 and Sunday, Nov. 10, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. (last vehicle admitted at 1:45 p.m.)

This event is for Lakewood residents only; a utility bill or ID is required to show proof of residence. Participants should be prepared to back up a steep ramp, unload all items yourself, bag all loose items and wear proper footwear.

Additional rules:

- 5-minute time limit to unload items
- No box vans or vehicles taller than 7 feet
- Trailers over 4-feet-by-8-feet prohibited
- Unsafe vehicles may be cited

Accepted items:

- Tires (removed from rims)
- Bicycles
- Furniture
- Grills
- Appliances
- Recyclables
- Bagged garbage

Not accepted:

- Commercial waste
- Loose items
- Paint/hazardous materials
- Yard waste
- Construction waste
- Lumber longer than 8 feet
- Concrete
- Auto parts
- Explosive materials
- Propane tanks
- Electronics
- Donations
- Mattresses



Representatives from Sister City Gimhae, Republic of Korea visited Lakewood this summer.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

CPSD STUDENTS SERVE LAKEWOOD WITH PRIDE

Contributed by Clover Park School District

When around Lakewood and at events, you can often find a crowd of Clover Park School District (CPSD) students wearing bright green T-shirts that say, "I clover CPSD." These students are active and dedicated members of the Lakewood community, volunteering their time during evenings, weekends and school breaks to support the district, city and broader community.

CPSD is committed to developing students who are equipped to succeed in a fast-paced future and eager to be productive members of their greater community. As part of those efforts, CPSD offers volunteering opportunities at citywide events such as SummerFEST and park and wildlife cleanup projects.

Last year, the Superintendent's Youth Advisory Council (SYAC) took on service as part of its efforts by volunteering in nursing homes and creating a series of fentanyl awareness videos to share with the district and greater Pierce County community. This year's SYAC will continue those efforts.

If you know a student that is interested in making a difference in our community, contact CPSD's community relations office at 253-583-5040.

WEST PIERCE FIRE & RESCUE TO HAVE ITEM ON NOVEMBER BALLOT

Contributed by West Pierce Fire & Rescue

West Pierce Fire & Rescue seeks to replace its tax-based Maintenance & Operations (M&O) levy with a Fire Benefit Charge (FBC). Known as Proposition 1, the FBC will be on the Nov. 5 ballot.

A FBC is not a tax, but a fee based on how a property is used and the size of structures. The fee is not based on assessed value — instead the use, fire risk factors and total square footage of buildings over 400 square feet. It does not apply to vacant land.

Current tax methodologies are based on a property's assessed value. Therefore, two residential homes with the same square footage can pay significantly different taxes, based on the value of their property. With a FBC, homes of a similar size will pay the same amount, regardless of their assessed value.

With a FBC, larger commercial and industrial properties would generally pay more to the fire department. In contrast, most homeowners would pay less.

If the proposal is approved, property taxes will be reduced by eliminating 100% of the district's current four-year Maintenance & Operations levy and reducing the statutory rate of the Regular Levy by 33%.



SIGN UP FOR LAKEWOOD NEWS

Our weekly email newsletter covers important news, upcoming events, construction updates and more.



DON'T MISS CITY EVENTS

Visit our events calendar to see a list of upcoming and recurring events hosted by the city. Add the events to your calendar to make sure you never miss out on the fun!



REPORT NEIGHBORHOOD ISSUES

Report potholes, code violations and other items to MyLakewood311. Receive status updates as city staff work on your issue.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Find Lakewood on social media to see what's happening in real-time. We're on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.