

CITY MANAGER

LAKEWOOD *Colorado*



Why Apply?



This is a unique opportunity to lead the City of Lakewood, one of Colorado's largest cities, known for its forward-thinking approach to public service. Adjacent to Denver and with easy access to the Rocky Mountains, Lakewood offers both urban amenities and an exceptional outdoor lifestyle. After almost 18 years in the position, the current City Manager is retiring, creating a rare leadership transition.

The new City Manager will lead a highly professional, collaborative, and well-respected municipal organization with a strong culture of service, stability, and innovation. The City benefits from experienced, long-tenured staff, a supportive and engaged City Council, and a community that values a high quality of life, outdoor amenities, and thoughtful growth. Joining at a pivotal time, the City Manager will help shape economic development, address complex community challenges, and build on a strong organizational foundation.



Welcome to LAKEWOOD

Lakewood is a vibrant community of 156,000 residents located at the base of the Rocky Mountains, adjacent to Denver's western border. As Colorado's fifth-largest city, Lakewood offers the amenities of a major urban region while retaining much of its small-town feel and abundant open space.

Known for its expansive park system, the City of Lakewood maintains more than 114 parks and over 7,400 acres of natural areas, providing one of the highest ratios of park and recreation space per capita in the country. Spanning more than 2,600 acres, the popular Bear Creek Lake Park features scenic lakes and opportunities for camping, fishing, paddling, hiking, and mountain biking. The City also operates two highly regarded public golf courses, including Fox Hollow—one of the first courses in the country built to be fully accessible for people with disabilities.

Located in the heart of the city, Lakewood's Belmar neighborhood serves as a modern downtown district with walkable streets, restaurants, shopping, offices, public art, and community gathering spaces. Arts and entertainment are also central to community life, with the Lakewood Cultural Center hosting regional and touring productions along with year-round arts programming, studios, and community events. Outdoor summer concerts bring the community together with local food and live music. Just west of the city, the iconic Red Rocks Park & Amphitheatre draws internationally known performers, making the city a hub for concertgoers.

Surrounded by both urban amenities and mountain landscapes, Lakewood has immediate access to the best of both worlds. Ski resorts, hiking trails, and mountain towns are within easy driving distance, while downtown Denver—with its professional sports venues and major cultural attractions—is just minutes away. The city is served by major transportation corridors including Interstate 70 and U.S. Highway 6, along with light rail connections to downtown Denver and Denver International Airport.





THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD

The City of Lakewood serves a population of 156,000 across 44 square miles with a 2026 budget of \$328 million and a team of 877 FTEs (1,828 including part-time and seasonal staff). Departments include City Attorney, City Clerk, City Manager, Community Resources, Finance & Economic Development, Municipal Courts, Operational Services (HR, Facilities & Infrastructure, Information Technology), Police, Public Works, and Sustainability & Community Development. The City of Lakewood does not have any recognized employee unions or collective bargaining agreements.

Incorporated in 1969, the City of Lakewood operates under a Home Rule Charter with the Council-Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of a Mayor elected at large and 10 Council members, two elected from each of the City's five wards. The Council appoints a City Manager to run the daily affairs of the City.

City Hall is located in the Lakewood Civic Center, which serves as the City's civic and administrative hub, housing City Council chambers, city offices, police, and courts. The civic campus also includes a public plaza, library, and cultural center that support community access and engagement.

FTEs
877

BUDGET
\$328 million

AREA
44 square
miles

POPULATION
156,000



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description at
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THE CITY MANAGER

The City Manager serves as the Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Lakewood, responsible to the Mayor and City Council for the leadership and administration of all City operations, excluding Municipal Court and the City Attorney's Office. The City Manager collaborates with the Mayor and City Council to identify and address strategic priorities; oversees economic development and intergovernmental partnerships; and ensures City operations reflect the values, goals, and policies set by City Council. The City Manager provides organization-wide leadership to a large, diverse workforce and coordinates fiscal stewardship and service excellence to support the Lakewood community.

IDEAL CANDIDATE TRAITS

- Collaborative and relationship-oriented leader who builds trust with Council, staff, and the community.
- Strong communicator with the ability to engage the public and clearly explain complex issues.
- Experienced, politically astute, and highly skilled at navigating competing priorities and perspectives.
- Expertise in financial management, with the ability to balance fiscal constraints and strategic priorities.
- Strategic thinker with experience in economic development, land use, and long-term planning.
- Resilient and adaptable, with the ability to manage criticism and high expectations.
- High emotional intelligence with the ability to unify teams and foster a positive culture.
- Innovative and solution-oriented, willing to explore creative approaches to complex challenges.
- Visible and engaged leader who connects with the community beyond formal settings.
- Strong ethical foundation with integrity, transparency, and accountability.



OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Economic Development & Land Use

The City faces opportunities to revitalize key corridors and strengthen economic development efforts while navigating community resistance to zoning changes. The next City Manager will help guide thoughtful redevelopment, balance growth with community expectations, and identify strategies to attract businesses and sustain long-term economic vitality.

Financial Sustainability

The City is operating in a constrained fiscal environment with structural budget pressures, reduced reserves, and competing demands for resources. The next leader must guide the City team, Council, and community to ensure fiscal discipline, maintain existing assets, prioritize investments, and clearly communicate financial realities while maintaining service levels.



Community Trust & Engagement

Rebuilding and maintaining trust with the community is a critical priority. Recent initiatives have highlighted the need for stronger communication, transparency, and engagement. The next City Manager will play a key role in fostering meaningful dialogue and ensuring community members feel heard.



Homelessness & Social Issues

Like many communities, the City is addressing increasing homelessness and related challenges. Balancing compassion, resource limitations, and community expectations will require coordinated strategies, regional partnerships, and innovative approaches.



Organizational Leadership & Transition

With a long-tenured workforce and leadership transitions on the horizon, the City must focus on succession planning, employee engagement, and maintaining its strong organizational culture. The next City Manager will need to inspire staff, set clear expectations, and drive continued performance and innovation.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a closely related field.
- At least 7 years of progressively responsible senior leadership experience in local government.
- Demonstrated ability to manage complex organizational and community issues.
- Experience with economic development, public-private partnerships, and intergovernmental cooperation.
- Or equivalent education and experience that demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities.

DESIRED: Master's degree and prior City Manager experience in comparable local governments.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Lakewood offers an annual salary range of \$320,000 to \$380,000, based on qualifications and experience, along with a comprehensive [benefits](#) package.

RESOURCES

[City Charter](#)

[City Values](#)

[Budgets](#)

[Comprehensive Planning](#)

[Community Communications](#)

[Community Profile](#)



TO APPLY

Apply Online: gmphr.com

First Review: **June 28, 2026**

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