



Economic Development Strategic Plan

City of Lakewood

2025 - 2030

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LETTER FROM CITY COUNCIL



Dear Lakewood Community,

We are excited to share with you our city's latest initiative to secure a prosperous future for Lakewood. On March 26, 2024, our City Council approved a recommendation to develop Lakewood's first-ever economic development strategic plan. This decision aligns with our recently adopted Vision, Mission, and Values Statements, which prioritize the promotion of our city's economic health and prosperity.

As your City Council, we believe this plan will be instrumental in guiding Lakewood through the post-COVID economic transition and ensuring our continued success. Lakewood has long been an economic engine for the region, and this economic development strategic plan will build upon that strong foundation. The plan includes clear, measurable objectives and key results. Importantly, the recommendations are based on results from a community focus group to ensure that our economic strategy aligns with your priorities and vision for Lakewood.

Our goal is to create a vibrant, diverse, and resilient local economy that benefits all residents. We aim to stimulate new investment in our commercial centers, support the growth and success of existing businesses, and attract new amenities that enhance our quality of life.

We invite you all to read this economic development plan and participate in the implementation process as we work together to shape Lakewood's economic future. Together, we will build a thriving Lakewood for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Council Member Todd Rogers
District 1



Council Member Rudy Villarreal
District 2



Mayor Jeff Wood
District 3



Vice Mayor David Arellano
District 4



Council Member Cassandra Chase
District 5

LETTER FROM THE CITY MANAGER



Dear Lakewood Community,

As your City Manager, I am excited to share with you our plans to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan for Lakewood. This initiative is crucial for our city's future prosperity and growth.

Lakewood has always been a vibrant community with a strong economic foundation. However, to ensure our continued success and adapt to changing economic landscapes, we must take proactive steps. A well-crafted economic development plan will serve as our roadmap to create job opportunities, attract private sector investment, and foster business development.

Additionally, this plan aligns with our recently adopted Vision, Mission, and Values Statements, prioritizing the promotion of our city's economic health and prosperity and will focus on several key areas:

1. Retaining and expanding existing businesses
2. Attracting new businesses to diversify our economic base
3. Improving our housing inventory and quality
4. Streamlining our licensing, development review, and permitting processes

We believe these efforts will not only create new job opportunities but also enhance the overall quality of life for our residents. A thriving business community means increased tax revenue, which in turn allows us to invest in public services and infrastructure improvements. Your engagement in this process is critical to our future success.

Together, we can build a prosperous future for our city, maintaining Lakewood's status as an economic engine for the region. Thank you for your continued support and engagement in shaping Lakewood's future.

Sincerely,



Thaddeus McCormack
City Manager of Lakewood, CA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lakewood Economic Development Strategic Plan has been developed through the collaboration and contributions of various individuals and organizations. Special appreciation is extended to the City of Lakewood's leadership, including the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, and the Community Development Department, for their essential role in guiding the development of this plan. The involvement and oversight of the City Council Members and the Economic Development Committee were also critical in shaping the strategic direction.

The insights gained from the focus group report, which identified both strengths and areas for improvement in Lakewood's economic landscape, were made possible by the participation of local business owners, stakeholders, and residents. Their input has been invaluable in aligning the plan with the needs and priorities of the community.

Recognition is also due to the economic development consultants and experts who provided their expertise and support to city staff throughout the project. Their contributions have been crucial in creating a thorough and actionable strategy aimed at advancing Lakewood's economic goals.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Vision

The City of Lakewood shall be a leading economic hub, attracting top industries and promoting sustainable growth through a skilled workforce, strong community connections, and an exceptional quality of life.

Mission Statement

The City of Lakewood will promote sustainable economic growth through targeted investments, business development, and workforce alignment, creating a strong and welcoming environment for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Strategic Objective Areas

1 Real Estate Investment

To promote private investment in commercial real estate and revitalization efforts that expand the city's tax base, support business growth, and create employment opportunities through commercial and mixed-use projects.

2 Business Attraction & Retention

To attract and retain businesses that diversify Lakewood's economy by leveraging its location, infrastructure, and resources, enhancing the city's competitiveness in both regional and national markets.

3 Workforce Development

To advance education and training programs aligned with industry needs, building a skilled workforce capable of supporting both current industries and future economic sectors, contributing to sustainable local employment.

4 Industry Cluster Development

To strengthen and grow key industry sectors, encouraging collaboration among businesses and encouraging innovation to drive economic growth and create high-quality jobs in Lakewood.

5 Quality of Life

To improve public safety, expand community services, and enhance amenities such as parks and recreational facilities, making Lakewood a more attractive and desirable place for residents and businesses.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Strategic Plan

For over seventy years, the City of Lakewood has been a key player in local governance and economic development. Through its contract city model, well-planned residential neighborhoods, and evolving retail sector, Lakewood has continually adapted to meet the needs of its community. The city has also partnered with nearby Long Beach to address changes in the aerospace manufacturing industry, bolstering regional economic stability.

This Economic Development Strategic Plan is designed to provide a clear direction for future growth by identifying key opportunities, addressing challenges, and leveraging the city's existing assets. The plan will serve as a framework to guide Lakewood's economic initiatives, supporting both long-term development and the overall well-being of its residents.

Over the next five years, Lakewood aims to solidify its position as a dynamic and resilient economic hub by capitalizing on its strategic location and diverse business base. The city plans to attract and retain companies in high-potential sectors such as experiential retail, advanced manufacturing, and aerospace.

By cultivating a skilled, adaptable workforce that is well-connected to local industries, Lakewood will promote sustainable growth and economic stability. The city is focused on enhancing its business environment while improving the quality of life for its residents, positioning Lakewood as a competitive destination for both businesses and talent.

Through targeted investments and proactive strategies, Lakewood is committed to strengthening its economic foundation. By improving infrastructure, attracting businesses in key industries, and aligning workforce skills with market demands, the city will create a stable and supportive environment for businesses of all sizes. These efforts will help position Lakewood as a central economic force in the region, promoting sustainable growth and prosperity for years to come.



Overview of the Planning Process

The development of Lakewood's Economic Development Strategic Plan was an eight-month process, initiated in March 2024 and culminating in December 2024. This timeframe allowed for a thorough and deliberate approach, ensuring that all key aspects of economic growth were explored and integrated into the final strategy. The process followed a comprehensive and data-driven approach, incorporating multiple layers of analysis and stakeholder engagement. It began with an Economic Development Focus Group Report, where key stakeholders across the Lakewood community were consulted to identify potential growth areas, existing challenges, and strategic priorities. These insights provided a foundational understanding of local economic conditions and community expectations, shaping the direction of the Strategic Plan.

In parallel, economists conducted an Economic Trends Report, offering a detailed analysis of Lakewood's socio-economic profile, including demographic patterns, income levels, employment trends, and other key indicators. This data-driven assessment provided critical context for evaluating the city's economic landscape and informed the plan's policy recommendations.

Throughout the process, a consultant group was engaged to work closely with the City of Lakewood Economic Development Committee, meeting at key milestones to review progress and gather input. During these sessions, the Committee underscored the importance of expanding experiential entertainment as a strategic approach to attracting new investment and enhancing the city's appeal. Additionally, the Committee emphasized the need for both daytime and nighttime retail services, recognizing the potential of a more robust 24-hour economy to support business sustainability and drive economic growth. This collaborative, evidence-based approach ensured that the Strategic Plan was both responsive to community needs and grounded in sound economic analysis.



Stakeholder Engagement and Methodology

The City of Lakewood initiated the June-July 2024 Economic Development Focus Group to inform its strategic economic development planning. This focus group was designed to gather insights from key stakeholders, including business leaders, real estate developers, workforce professionals, and policymakers. By engaging a cross-section of community members, the city sought to identify both opportunities for growth and potential challenges facing the local economy. The focus group methodology was developed in collaboration with Lakewood staff, drawing from established best practices and recognized resources such as the Urban Institute's "Community Voice and Power Sharing Guidebook" to ensure rigor and relevance. The goal was to capture a comprehensive picture of Lakewood's economic landscape and develop informed strategies for future growth.

The focus group targeted 21 participants, including business owners, property developers, and other key stakeholders involved in the local economic ecosystem. To encourage broad participation, the focus group questionnaire was designed to take 10 minutes, with respondents completing it either online or through phone interviews. The focus group questionnaire balanced quantitative measures, such as rating workforce quality and business expansion prospects, with qualitative questions to allow for deeper insights into community strengths and concerns. The diverse respondent base, though skewed toward male participants, provided valuable perspectives on Lakewood's workforce, infrastructure needs, and economic development challenges, ensuring that the findings reflect a broad range of experiences and views.

Data analysis involved both statistical and thematic methods. Quantitative responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to reveal patterns, while qualitative responses were examined for recurring themes and narratives that highlight shared community concerns and opportunities. Comparisons across different respondent groups, such as residents versus business owners, allowed for a nuanced understanding of varying stakeholder perspectives. The focus group findings have provided the City of Lakewood with a solid foundation of insights, helping guide the next steps in developing a strategic economic development plan that is responsive to local needs and aligned with the city's long-term vision for growth and investment.

As part of Lakewood's stakeholder engagement efforts, the experiences of local business owners offer valuable insights into the city's business environment. One such example is the opening of Sender One, a rock-climbing center, which was launched in August 2024 after significant renovation of a former Office Depot building. Alice Kao, the owner and CEO, praised Lakewood's business-friendly approach, particularly highlighting the support she received throughout the process of obtaining a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Kao noted that, unlike her experiences in other cities, Lakewood's city officials provided hands-on guidance, making the process seamless and efficient. Her positive feedback underscores the city's commitment to fostering a welcoming environment for new businesses, particularly those focused on providing unique experiences for families and individuals. Sender One's success reflects Lakewood's potential as a prime location for experiential businesses, aligning with the city's broader economic development goals.

ABOUT LAKEWOOD

Lakewood City Council Members



Council Member
Todd Rogers
District 1



Council Member
Rudy Villarreal
District 2



Mayor
Jeff Wood
District 3



Vice Mayor
David Arellano
District 4



Council Member
Cassandra Chase
District 5

Lakewood City Manager



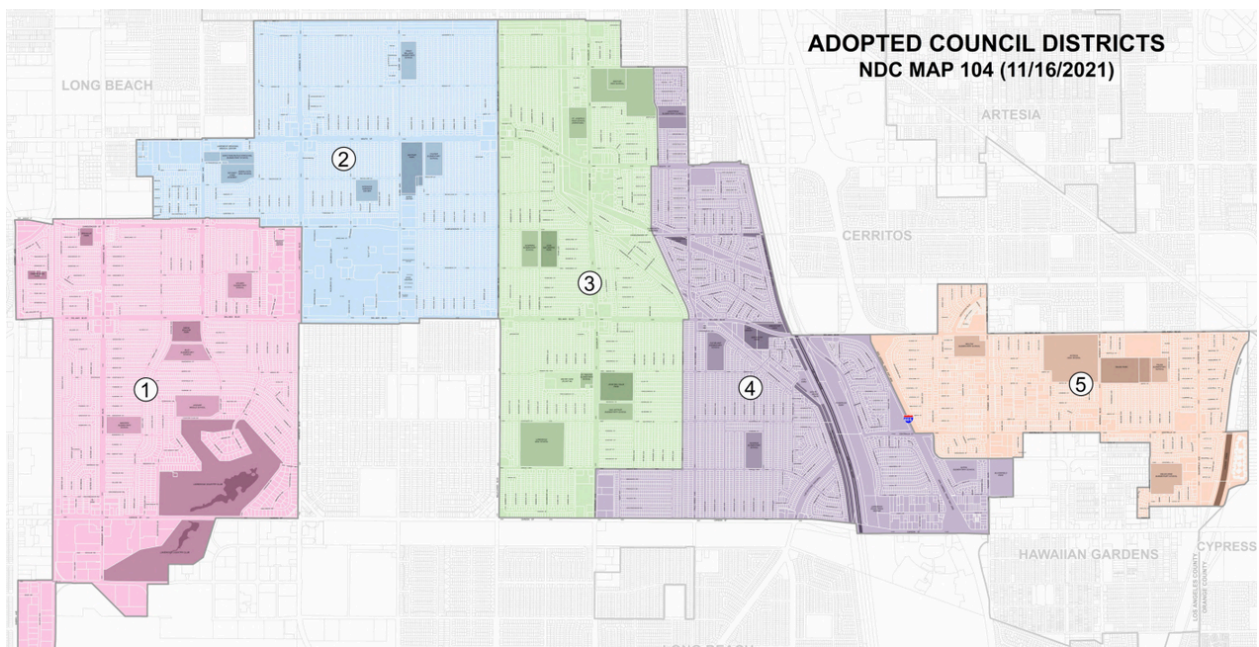
City Manager
Thaddeus McCormack



Government Structure

Lakewood operates as a general law city under the laws of the State of California, with governance provided by a five-member City Council elected by district to serve staggered four-year terms. The Council selects a mayor and vice mayor annually from among its members, with the mayor serving a largely ceremonial role while presiding over Council meetings. Lakewood follows a council-manager system, where the City Manager, appointed by the Council, oversees the daily operations of the city, including implementing policies and managing the budget. The City Council also appoints the City Attorney and members to city commissions such as the Community Safety Commission, Planning and Environment Commission, and Recreation and Community Services Commission, which are composed of residents serving voluntarily.

Since its incorporation in 1954, Lakewood has efficiently managed its municipal services through a combination of direct city services and strategic contracts, including those with Los Angeles County for law enforcement and public works. This approach allows the city to balance effective governance with fiscal responsibility.



Area and Location

The City of Lakewood, situated in southern Los Angeles County, spans 9.5 square miles and is approximately 23 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles. With a population of 82,496 as of the 2020 U.S. Census, Lakewood is a well-established community with a robust infrastructure that includes 150 miles of streets and 300 miles of sidewalks. The city's landscape features over 36,000 trees and 150 acres of parks and open space, enhancing its appeal as a residential and business-friendly environment. Lakewood's economy is predominantly driven by its commercial and retail sectors, with almost 3,000 businesses operating within its borders. The housing stock is primarily single-family homes, representing 85% of all residential units, reinforcing their character as a stable, family-oriented community.



LAKEWOOD'S CITY COUNCIL ADOPTED GOALS



01 Safe Community

Lakewood is a safe community and prepared to protect lives and property through our partnerships with public safety agencies, the application of proven risk management practices, and public education.



02 Recreation & Leisure Opportunities

Residents and visitors benefit from Lakewood's parks, leisure facilities, public spaces, and recreational programs for all ages that promote a healthy community and make Lakewood a great place to live and play.



03 High Performing Government

Lakewood is a leader in city government and effective in delivering outstanding municipal services through collaboration with public agencies and private businesses with the guidance of the Lakewood City Council.



04 Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion

Lakewood celebrates its broad diversity and creates and enhances efforts that built on all the good in Lakewood to make the city the safest and most welcoming place it can be, for everyone.



05 Fiscal Responsibility

Lakewood's financial resources are managed in a responsible and prudent manner. The city makes informed decisions about how to allocate funds and maintain a balanced budget that serves the community's needs and priorities.



06 Well Maintained Infrastructure

Lakewood plans, develops, and maintains a high-quality built environment of city facilities and infrastructure that makes Lakewood livable and attractive.



07 An Informed & Engaged Community

Lakewood gives community members access to accurate and timely information about issues that affect them, as well as opportunities to engage in dialogue with one another and with civic leaders. Lakewood also recognizes the importance of service to the community, and actively encourages volunteerism to help youth, seniors, those in need and the community as a whole.



08 Economic Health & Prosperity

Lakewood actively promotes a healthy and prosperous local economy and stimulates new investment to help the local economy grow and businesses to thrive.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SYNOPSIS

POPULATION DYNAMICS

82,496

**Current
Population**

1.03%

**Growth
Since 2000**

38.4

Median Age

8,537

**Density Per
SQ Mile**

Lakewood's population density of 8,537 persons per square mile far exceeds Los Angeles County's 2,420, creating opportunities for efficient infrastructure investment and strong local service demand.

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE



90.4% of adults have high school diplomas, far exceeding county (80.3%) and state (84.4%) rates.

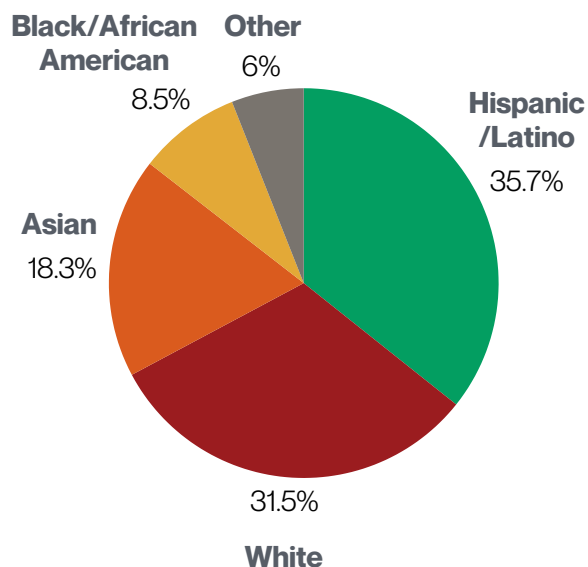


32.9% hold bachelor's degrees or higher, providing skilled workforce advantage.



Only **0.3%** dropout rate for ages 16-19, compared to 2.8% county average.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY



Lakewood's increasing diversity drives economic activity across multiple sectors.

INCOME & ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

\$113,030

Median Household Income

Significantly above county and state

\$129,703

Average Household Income

Strong economic foundation

4.2%

Poverty Rate

Well below regional averages

3.1

People Per Household

Surpasses the county & state averages of 2.9

EMPLOYMENT LANDSCAPE



45,208 civilian labor force with **5.7%** unemployment rate, below county and state averages.



25.6% in professional occupations, **15.4%** in management and financial operations.

REGIONAL SPECIALIZATION

Transportation & Warehousing

1.37 LQ

Educational Services & Healthcare

1.14 LQ

Manufacturing

1.11 LQ

Wholesale Trade

1.10 LQ

A Location Quotient (LQ) is a measure that shows how concentrated a certain industry is in a city compared to the region or country. An LQ greater than 1 indicates the region is more specialized in that industry.



ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Introduction to Lakewood's Economic Landscape

Lakewood's economic landscape is shaped by its high population density, slow growth, and diverse socioeconomic structure. Although the city has experienced modest population growth over recent years, its dense population offers economic advantages, such as strong demand for local services and cost-efficiency in infrastructure investment. The city's diverse racial and ethnic composition contributes to a multifaceted workforce and consumer base, which can drive economic activity across a variety of sectors. With a relatively mature population, Lakewood must focus on workforce development strategies that address the needs of both its established labor force and emerging generations, while leveraging its dense urban environment to attract business and investment.

Economically, Lakewood benefits from a well-educated workforce and a diverse employment base across key industries, including education, healthcare, retail, and manufacturing. Its strategic location near major transportation hubs enhances opportunities in sectors such as logistics and manufacturing, providing stable employment for a wide range of skill levels. Service sectors also play a significant role in the city's economy, supporting a robust middle-class job market. Moving forward, Lakewood will need to capitalize on these strengths while exploring opportunities in emerging industries to remain competitive in the regional economy.

Economic Trends and Forecasts

Population

As of the 2020 U.S. Census, the City of Lakewood's population stood at 82,496, reflecting a modest growth of just 3.97% since 2000. This growth rate is higher than that of Los Angeles County (3.2%), but notably lower than the State of California (15.51%) over the same period, suggesting that Lakewood has seen relatively stagnant population increases compared to the broader region. Despite its slower growth, Lakewood's population density of 8,537 persons per square mile is significantly higher than the County's 2,420 persons per square mile and the State's 251 persons per square mile, indicating a more concentrated urban setting. The city's aging population is reflected in a median age of 38.4 years, slightly above the County median of 37.4 years and the State median of 37.3 years. This aging demographic, coupled with modest growth, poses future challenges for workforce renewal and public service needs.

Racial and Ethnic Trends

Racial and ethnic diversity is a defining feature of Lakewood's population. As of 2022, 35.7% of residents identified as Hispanic or Latino, a notable increase from 30.1% in 2010, reflecting the broader trend of growing Hispanic populations across Southern California. White residents accounted for 31.5% of the population, a significant decline from 40.9% in 2010, indicative of demographic shifts in the region.

Asian residents make up 18.3% of the population, slightly above the County's average, while Black or African American residents represent 8.5%, which is higher than both the County and State proportions. These trends highlight the evolving cultural makeup of the city, with increasing diversity influencing local economic development, education, and community services.

Type and Size of Households

Lakewood's household structures are also noteworthy. In 2022, the city had 26,388 households, of which 77.8% were family households, compared to 66% in Los Angeles County and 68.3% across the State. A substantial 56.8% of Lakewood's households are married-couple families, significantly higher than the County's 44.1% and the State's 49.2%. Non-family households, on the other hand, make up only 22.2% of the total, compared to 34% in the County and 31.7% in California. The city also has a relatively high average household size of 3.1 people per household, surpassing the County and State averages of 2.9. This suggests that Lakewood remains a family-oriented community with larger households than the surrounding region. Furthermore, over one-third of the city's households have four or more people, which is higher than the County and State averages, reflecting the presence of larger, multi-generational households.

2022 Housing Units by Household Size¹

	Lakewood		LA County		California	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied Housing Units:	26,388		3,363,093		13,315,822	25%
1-Person Household	4,488	17.0%	870,733	25.9%	3,176,768	23.9%
2-Person Household	7,597	28.8%	951,318	28.3%	4,056,892	30.5%
3-Person Household	5,328	20.2%	566,462	16.8%	2,225,468	16.7%
4-or-More Person Household	8,975	34.0%	974,580	29.0%	3,856,694	29.0%

Educational Attainment

In terms of educational attainment, Lakewood compares favorably with both the County and the State. Only 9.6% of the population over the age of 25 lacks a high school diploma, a much lower figure than Los Angeles County's 19.7% and California's 15.6%. Additionally, 35.4% of residents have attended some college, and 32.9% hold a bachelor's degree or higher, indicating a well-educated workforce. The city's lower school dropout rate (0.3% for those aged 16 to 19) further underscores its strong educational foundation, compared to the County (2.8%) and State (2.6%). This high level of educational attainment provides Lakewood with a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining businesses that require a skilled labor force.

Labor Force and Employment

Lakewood's labor market is robust, with a civilian labor force of 45,208 in 2022, of which 42,640 were employed. The city's unemployment rate of 5.7% was lower than both the County (7.0%) and the State (6.4%), demonstrating a relatively strong local economy. The city's workforce is diversified across a range of industries, with nearly one-quarter of workers employed in the educational services, healthcare, and social assistance sectors—an area where Lakewood has a location quotient of 1.14, indicating regional specialization. Retail trade, manufacturing, and transportation are also key sectors, with manufacturing showing a location quotient of 1.11, reflecting Lakewood's industrial heritage and proximity to major logistics hubs such as the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. The city's employment structure is a blend of white-collar and blue-collar jobs, with a notable share of jobs in professional occupations (25.6%) and management and financial operations (15.4%).

Employment Location Quotient > 1 (Regional Specialization):	
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	1.37
Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance	1.14
Manufacturing	1.11
Wholesale Trade	1.10
Retail Trade	1.10
Employment Location Quotient < 1 (Less Concentrated):	
Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	0.92
Construction	0.89
Professional, Scientific, Management, & Administration and Waste Mgmt. Services	0.71
Information	0.54
Employment Location Quotient = 1 (Neutral):	
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	1.00

Income Level, Inequality, and Poverty

Income levels in Lakewood are relatively high compared to the surrounding region. In 2022, the city's median household income was \$113,030, significantly higher than the median income in Los Angeles County (\$83,411) and California (\$91,905). Lakewood's average household income of \$129,703 also exceeded the County average of \$119,756. These income levels contribute to lower poverty rates in the city, with only 4.2% of families living below the poverty line, compared to 10.0% in Los Angeles County and 8.5% across the State. Lakewood also exhibits lower income inequality, as measured by its Gini coefficient of 0.38, which is considerably lower than the County's 0.50 and the State's 0.49. This relatively equitable income distribution suggests that economic opportunities are more evenly spread across the population in Lakewood than in the broader region.

2022 Average & Median Household Income and Per Capita Income²

	Lakewood	LA County	California
Average Household Income (In 2022 Inflation Adjusted \$)	\$129,703	\$119,756	\$130,718
Median Household Income (In 2022 Inflation Adjusted \$)	\$113,030	\$83,411	\$91,905
Per Capita Income (In 2022 Inflation Adjusted \$)	\$43,086	\$41,847	\$45,591

Housing Characteristics

Housing characteristics in Lakewood reflect the city's stability and desirability as a place to live. The homeownership rate of 71.7% is well above the County's 46.2% and the State's 55.6%, reinforcing Lakewood's position as a primarily homeowner-driven community. The vacancy rate in the city is just 2.4%, significantly lower than the County's 6.6% and the State's 7.7%. The median value of owner-occupied homes in Lakewood was \$695,200 in 2022, and more recent market data shows median sales prices rising to approximately \$850,000, reflecting strong demand. Renters in Lakewood face higher costs than those in the surrounding areas, with average rents of \$2,144, compared to \$1,892 in Los Angeles County and \$1,941 in California. Rent burden remains an issue, with over half (51.8%) of renter households paying more than 30% of their income on housing, although this rate is lower than the County's 54.5%.

2022 Housing Tenure³

	Lakewood		LA County		California	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Occupied Housing Units:	26,388		3,363,093		13,315,822	
Owner Occupied	18,915	71.7%	1,552,164	46.2%	7,407,361	55.6%
Renter Occupied	7,473	28.3%	1,810,929	53.9%	5,908,461	44.4%

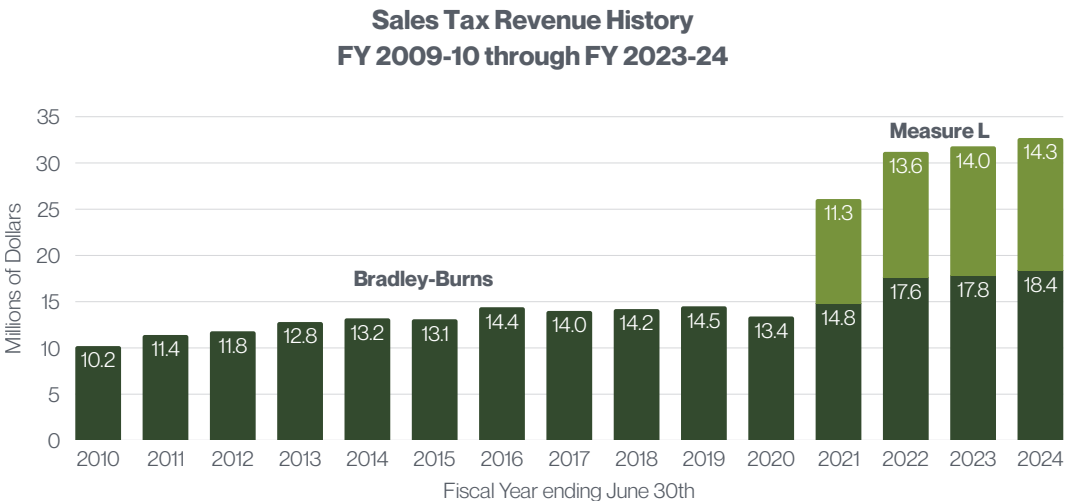
Transportation

Transportation in Lakewood is dominated by car usage, with 85.7% of workers commuting by car or truck, either driving alone (77.6%) or carpooling (8.1%). This is higher than both the County (77.3%) and State (78.0%). Only 1.6% of workers in Lakewood used public transportation, which is significantly lower than the 4.9% in Los Angeles County and 3.8% across the State. The availability of regional transit services, or lack thereof, likely contributes to the city's lower public transit ridership. Lakewood also has a higher proportion of households with three or more vehicles (36.9%) compared to the County (22.9%) and State (26.2%), reflecting higher vehicle ownership rates, which is consistent with the city's higher household incomes.



Sales Tax Revenue

Sales tax revenue remains a critical component of Lakewood's fiscal health, serving as the largest source of General Fund revenue. Despite initial concerns about the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the city's sales tax revenues have performed better than expected. For FY 2023-24, the city projects that its Bradley Burns Sales Tax and Measure L Sales Tax revenues will exceed initial estimates by \$680,000 and \$200,000, respectively. These strong sales tax collections underscore the resilience of Lakewood's retail and service sectors, providing the city with a stable financial base for future investments in infrastructure, public services, and economic development initiatives.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective 1: Real Estate Investment



Vision: To catalyze strategic real estate investment and revitalization that strengthens Lakewood’s economic foundation, enhances community spaces, expands the tax base, and creates quality jobs through targeted commercial and mixed-use development, beginning with the transformation of key assets like the Lakewood Center.

This section outlines Lakewood’s implementation-focused approach to real estate investment, anchored by the recently established Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District. With the Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District now in place, the City is shifting from planning to execution and prioritizing the redevelopment of high-potential sites like the Lakewood Center through coordinated public-private partnerships, modernized land use policies, and strategic infrastructure investments. Through the Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District, the City will reinvest a portion of future tax revenues directly into improvements that support redevelopment, such as upgraded streetscapes, transit access, and public amenities. These investments will help unlock sustainable private development, particularly in mixed-use and commercial nodes, driving long-term economic growth and fiscal resilience across Lakewood.

SWOT Summary



Action Items

»» Incentivize Real Estate Investments

Establish a range of incentives, including tax credits, reduced development fees, and state-supported grants, specifically for developments in priority zones. Focus on areas that align with industry clusters like advanced manufacturing, aerospace, healthcare, and automotive sectors.

» **Case Study:** Riverside County's Business Incentive Zones offer businesses in designated areas tax credits, rebates, and low-interest loans, including over \$37,000 in state income tax credits per qualified employee. These zones, including a State Enterprise Zone and Recycling Market Development Zones, aim to attract businesses aligned with key industry clusters.

Engage private developers by streamlining permitting and creating a dedicated role, similar to the City of Long Beach's RISE (Restoration Initiative for Safety and Employment) program, to navigate regulatory processes and provide ongoing support for projects aligned with the city's economic development goals.

» **Case Study:** The City of San Diego's Life Science Industry Accelerator program streamlines permitting and provides dedicated resources and ongoing support to life science companies. This initiative aligns with San Diego's economic goals by demonstrating how targeted programs can effectively engage private developers and support development projects.

Integrate the California Grants Portal (grants.ca.gov) into Lakewood's internal Capital Improvement Program planning cycle, allowing staff to monitor state infrastructure and economic vitality grants in real time and proactively prepare applications.

- **Case Study:** The City of Modesto's Community Development Department developed a centralized [grant dashboard](#) synced with the state's portal, resulting in a 60% increase in successful funding applications for public works and revitalization projects.

➤➤ Revitalize Vacant and Underutilized Properties

Create and maintain an accessible digital platform that identifies and tracks vacant or underutilized properties, targeting them for redevelopment through public-private collaboration.

- **Case Study:** The [Balboa Reservoir Project](#) in San Francisco, a partnership between the city and private developers AvalonBay Communities and BRIDGE Housing, uses a dedicated [website](#) to track development progress, engage the community, and exemplify how digital platforms can support public-private redevelopment initiatives.

Implement incentive-based programs that encourage property owners to rehabilitate vacant commercial spaces, particularly in areas identified as high-potential for mixed-use or commercial development.

- **Case Study:** The [City of Azusa Small Business Support Grant Program \(SBSGP\)](#) offers eligible small businesses one-time cash assistance for improvements such as façade upgrades, interior and exterior renovations, outdoor operation enhancements, and parking upgrades to target high-potential commercial areas and encourage the rehabilitation of vacant or underutilized spaces.

Use a dual strategy of stricter code enforcement for aging properties, coupled with financial or advisory assistance to help property owners meet improvement requirements.

- **Case Study:** The [City of Yucaipa](#) implements a dual strategy of stricter code enforcement and financial assistance, offering programs such as a \$10,000 Commercial Façade Grant, low-interest loans for residential improvements, and a \$30,000 Restaurant Improvement Program. These targeted initiatives, requiring matching funds and focusing on key areas, encourage compliance and investment in both residential and commercial properties.

➤➤ Align Land-Use Planning with Industry Priorities

Update zoning regulations to support growth in targeted industry clusters such as healthcare, aerospace, and advanced manufacturing. Implement zoning changes that encourage higher-density developments and mixed-use projects in key districts.

- 
- » **Case Study:** The City of San Diego updated its zoning codes to support tech and research sector growth by designating areas for Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services within central and downtown communities, and Industrial zones for R&D, manufacturing, and distribution.

Establish special development districts (e.g., “Auto Square”) to streamline infrastructure improvements and attract industry-specific businesses. Facilitate these efforts by offering tailored infrastructure plans and amenities that support long-term growth in designated areas.

- » **Case Study:** The City of Turlock's Westside Industrial Specific Plan designates a 2,500-acre area for industrial development, streamlining processes to attract industries and support the buildout of the Turlock Regional Industrial Park, boosting job creation and economic growth.

»» **Maximize Use of Underutilized Assets**

Focus redevelopment efforts on properties with aging infrastructure by identifying new commercial or mixed-use opportunities. Prioritize the transformation of these areas into vibrant business hubs through zoning flexibility and developer incentives.

- » **Case Study:** The City of Emeryville addressed aging infrastructure by redeveloping abandoned industrial sites through two redevelopment areas, public-private partnerships, and zoning changes for high-density mixed-use projects. These efforts transformed vacant and underutilized properties into a vibrant hub of shopping, residential, and commercial developments.

Encourage transit-oriented developments (TODs) near major highways and public transport routes by offering land-use incentives, promoting denser commercial and residential projects in accessible areas.

- » **Case Study:** National City implemented a 760-acre Transit-Oriented Development Overlay (TODO) plan near the 24th Street Transit Center, promoting mixed-use developments, affordable housing, and improved connectivity. The plan enhances mobility with "Complete Streets" principles, fostering compact, sustainable urban growth around transit hubs.

»» **Develop a Phased Revitalization Framework for the Lakewood Center**

Conduct a market study to assess redevelopment potential, incorporating retail repositioning, mixed-use integration, and economic impact analysis.

Maintain flexible zoning and entitlement frameworks to preserve redevelopment optionality and allow phased reinvestment as market conditions evolve.

Engage property owners and development partners early through coordinated planning, environmental review, and design processes to reduce uncertainty and accelerate redevelopment.

Prioritize infrastructure, connectivity, and public realm improvements, potentially supported by tax increment financing, to enhance walkability and catalyze private investment.

Ensure revitalization builds on Lakewood Center's existing role as a major economic engine by aligning redevelopment with shared goals around fiscal stability, jobs, and community-serving uses.

► **Case Study:** Pacific Retail has successfully repositioned legacy regional malls into mixed-use destinations through phased redevelopment strategies. At Yorktown Center in Lombard, Illinois, Pacific Retail transformed a 1.4-million-square-foot enclosed mall into a mixed-use community hub, introducing over 600 residential units, new outward-facing retail and dining, activated green space, and improved pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

► **Case Study:** Similarly, District Galleria in White Plains, New York, Pacific Retail converted a vacant downtown mall into a walkable mixed-use district with approximately 3,000 residences, street-level retail, public plazas, and community facilities. In both cases, early alignment with local governments, flexible entitlements, and phased infrastructure investments helped unlock long-term value while maintaining economic continuity for surrounding communities.



Looking Ahead: Reimagining the Future of Lakewood Center

A Conversation with Pacific Retail

The following questions and responses highlight the perspective of Pacific Retail, one of the new owners of the Lakewood Center and the redevelopment lead, whose work specializes in repositioning underperforming retail assets, offering insight into how the Lakewood Center can evolve into a next-generation mixed-use destination.

How does Pacific Retail define “success” in large-scale mall repositioning projects for the owner, tenants, and the community?”

- *“Success is defined by outcomes that benefit all stakeholders. Unlocking long-term value for owners through densification and master planning; increasing foot traffic and built-in customer bases for tenants; creating walkable destinations with housing, green space, dining, and year-round programming for the community; and delivering a safer, more productive site with a growing tax base for municipalities.”*

What mix of uses or experiential elements has been most effective for keeping these destinations active beyond traditional retail?

- *“Pacific Retail’s most effective repositioning strategies emphasize a blend of uses that extend activity beyond shopping hours, including: residential integration to create a 24/7 customer base, curated food and beverage districts, entertainment and event-driven spaces, wellness and community-serving uses, and outdoor green space focused on placemaking.”*

What early ‘quick wins’ help build momentum before major redevelopment phases?

- *“Early momentum is built through improving walkability and the public realm, activating underutilized areas with interim programming, introducing community-serving nontraditional uses, and beginning master planning in partnership with local stakeholders ... Lakewood’s repositioning process is focused on engaging the City early to shape future optionality and reinvestment.”*

Why This Matters for Lakewood

Pacific Retail’s experience demonstrates that successful mall revitalization is not a single project but a *process*. One that blends early activation, long-term optionality, and sustained collaboration between the City and private partners. By adopting a phased revitalization framework informed by proven national examples, Lakewood can position the Lakewood Center to evolve while preserving its role as a regional economic engine.

Success Indicators

1 INCREASED PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT

- Number and value of new commercial and mixed-use developments resulting from financial incentives, PPPs, and streamlined processes.
 - Growth in private investment in revitalization projects in targeted districts.
-

2 PROPERTY REVITALIZATION AND OCCUPANCY RATES

- Number of vacant properties redeveloped and brought to market, with increased occupancy rates for commercial spaces.
 - Effectiveness of the vacant property tracking platform based on the transition of properties to active use within a specific time frame.
-

3 EXPANSION OF TAX BASE

- Year-over-year growth in property and sales tax revenue from newly developed or redeveloped commercial areas.
 - Increases in property values and business license registrations in revitalized districts.
-

4 PROJECT COMPLETION AND TENANT OCCUPANCY

- Number of commercial development projects completed, and the time taken from initiation to tenant occupancy.
 - Reduction in vacancy rates in key commercial corridors.
-

5 ZONING AND LAND-USE ALIGNMENT

- Number of zoning updates completed to align with strategic industry clusters.
 - Approval and implementation of special districts and infrastructure improvement plans in high-priority areas.
-

6 JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

- Number of jobs created through new commercial and mixed-use developments.
- Economic impact, including increases in local employment and business activity, driven by real estate investments.



Objective 2: Business Attraction & Retention

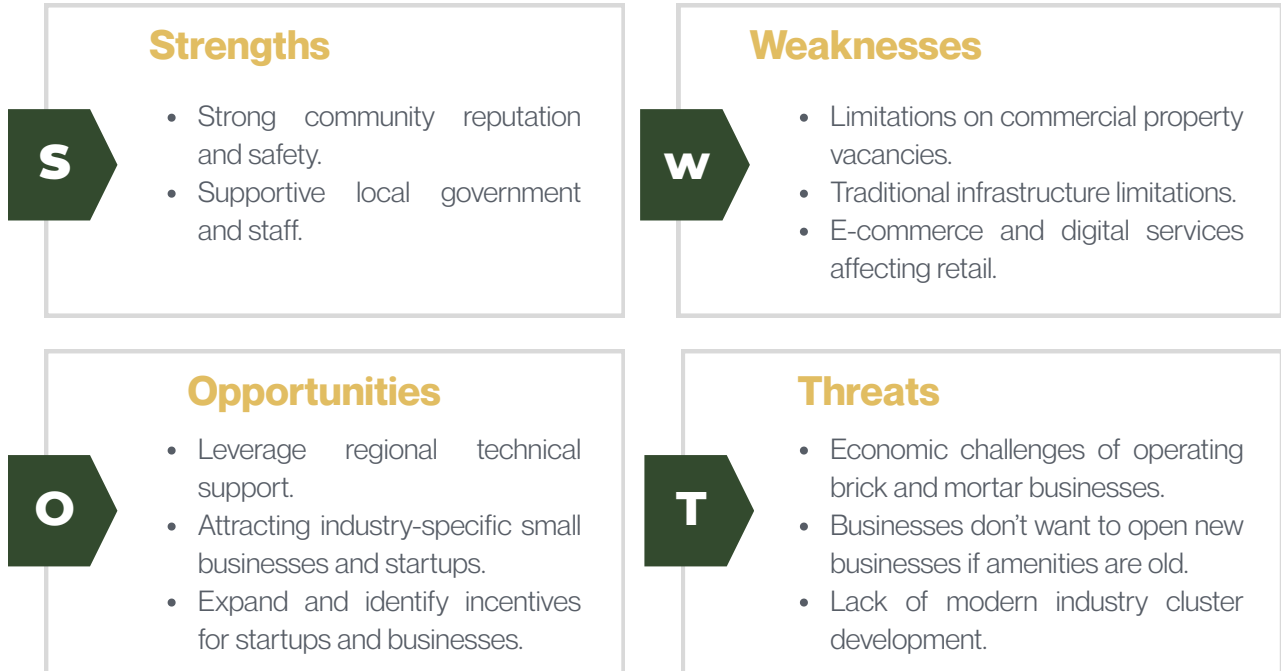


Vision: To attract and retain businesses that strengthen and diversify Lakewood's economy by leveraging its strategic location, modern infrastructure, and the active implementation of innovative financing tools, most notably, its established Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD).

This section highlights Lakewood's business attraction and retention strategy as a core pillar of its economic development agenda. With the Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) in place, the City is focused on aligning the EIFD with key industry clusters to attract private investment in aerospace, healthcare, logistics, retail innovation, and job creation.

Lakewood's high population density, well above county and state averages, is a significant strength, generating strong built-in consumer demand and making the City attractive to retailers, restaurants, and experiential businesses. In addition to infrastructure investment, the City will expand activation efforts to better connect residents with local businesses. This includes watch parties that spotlight local food vendors, culinary crawls, and family-oriented events that activate corridors and public spaces. By leveraging City assets to increase visibility and foot traffic, Lakewood will strengthen its local business ecosystem while positioning itself for long-term private investment and growth.

SWOT Summary



Action Items

»» Attract Targeted Industries

- Launch targeted digital and traditional marketing efforts showcasing Lakewood's strategic advantages in key industry sectors such as technology, healthcare, and clean energy.
- Collaborate with the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation and site selectors to attract high-growth industry clusters and showcase available commercial properties.
- Highlight Lakewood's streamlined permitting processes and available incentives through an enhanced city website and engagement with commercial brokers.

» **Case Study:** The City of Citrus Heights' Business Attraction Incentive Program targets key industries like restaurants, breweries, and entertainment venues to enhance economic vitality. Through strategic marketing, clear incentives, and collaboration with economic development organizations, the program attracts high-growth businesses, serving as a model for Lakewood's industry-focused recruitment efforts.

»» Activate Local Businesses Through Special Events and Pop-Ups

- Develop culinary crawls and special event activations that highlight local restaurants and home-based businesses during major regional events such as the World Cup and the 2028 Olympics.

- » **Case Study:** The City of Inglewood has used major sports and entertainment events to activate local businesses through curated food crawls, pop-up vending programs, and temporary marketplaces near SoFi Stadium. The City works with local restaurants and home-based vendors to showcase local chicken and comfort food concepts. By streamlining temporary permits and coordinating event programming, Inglewood has increased visibility for small food businesses, driven visitor spending, and created pathways for micro-entrepreneurs to grow their customer base during large-scale global events.

Activate local businesses through community-based clubs by supporting walking clubs, bike clubs, and recurring neighborhood activities that bring residents into commercial corridors and encourage regular patronage of local businesses.

- » **Case Study:** The Bixby Knolls Business Improvement Association in Long Beach launched the Strollers Club, a weekly walking group that routes participants through the commercial corridor, increasing foot traffic, strengthening customer loyalty, and reinforcing the district as a walkable, community-focused destination.

»» Support Local Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

Partner with the Small Business Development Centers and other local organizations to offer training, mentorship, and access to resources for local entrepreneurs.

- » **Case Study:** The City of Upland supports local entrepreneurs through its partnership with the Inland Empire Small Business Development Center, offering free one-on-one small business consulting every other Wednesday and management training programs. The city also hosts workshops on compliance, financial planning, labor laws, funding, and social media marketing, providing valuable resources for business growth.

Offer business facade improvement grants, low-interest loans, and tax relief for small businesses and startups, especially those in targeted growth sectors.

- » **Case Study:** The City of Long Beach supports local entrepreneurs through small business grants, including the *Visual Improvement Program* for vandalism repairs and *Inclusive Business Navigators Microgrants* for startups. The city provides relief grants for small businesses, nonprofits, and industries like restaurants and fitness, along with coaching, workshops, and partnerships with the Small Business Development Center to enhance business growth and sustainability.

Organize workshops on business growth strategies, digital marketing, and retail innovation to help local businesses compete in a changing market.

Leverage the California Business Incentives Resource Guide (CalBIS) to market programs such as the California Competes Tax Credit, Employment Training Panel workforce grants, and clean-tech sales tax exemptions to potential tenants and developers.

» **Case Study:** The City of Lancaster partnered with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, or GO-Biz, to bundle state tax credits and workforce grants into a targeted incentive package that attracted over 1,200 clean-energy jobs. A similar strategy in Lakewood could strengthen recruitment efforts in industrial corridors like South Street and Del Amo Boulevard, driving private investment and job creation in clean energy, logistics, and advanced manufacturing.

»» Enhance Day/Night Service Economy

Encourage mixed-use projects and businesses that operate outside traditional business hours to create a dynamic day/night economy.

» **Case Study:** The City of Los Angeles supports a dynamic day/night economy through its SmartLA 2028 strategy, promoting 24/7 accessible services, mixed-use developments, and businesses operating beyond traditional hours. The city also collaborates with local businesses to host evening events, boosting foot traffic and attracting both residents and visitors.

Work with local businesses to organize evening events and experiences that attract residents and visitors, promoting foot traffic after hours.

Support businesses offering 24-hour services to boost economic activity and address the needs of both daytime and nighttime consumers.



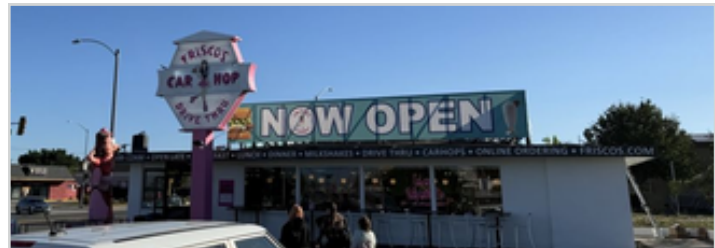
Business Highlights: Supporting Local Success in Lakewood

Lakewood's economic development approach is defined by active partnership with local businesses, hands-on guidance through permitting and development processes, and a commitment to helping entrepreneurs establish long-term roots in the community. The following business highlights illustrate how the City works directly with business owners to support growth, investment, and innovation across both destination-oriented and neighborhood-serving businesses.



Sender One

Sender One, an indoor rock-climbing and recreation center, opened in Lakewood in August 2024 through the adaptive reuse of a former Office Depot building, requiring significant renovations and approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Owner and CEO Alice Kao highlighted Lakewood's collaborative, business-friendly approach, noting that City staff provided hands-on guidance that streamlined approvals more efficiently than in other jurisdictions. As a result, Sender One opened on schedule and now attracts families and fitness enthusiasts from across the region, reinforcing Lakewood's role as a destination for experiential businesses while activating underutilized commercial space.



Frisco's Carhops

Frisco's Carhops, a locally owned Lakewood restaurant, reflects the City's hands-on, business-friendly approach, with owners George and Valarie Stathoulis noting Lakewood's organization and clear communication throughout the startup process. City staff provided timely guidance, straightforward requirements, and consistent follow-through, helping avoid delays and unnecessary back-and-forth often experienced elsewhere. Stathoulis noted that Lakewood's willingness to be accessible, answer questions quickly, and proactively assist made a meaningful difference in launching and operating their business. This level of support reinforced their decision to choose Lakewood and underscores the City's commitment to partnering with local, family-owned businesses to help them open efficiently and succeed long term.

Success Indicators

1 NEW BUSINESS ATTRACTION AND GROWTH

- » Increases in the number of new businesses opened annually, especially in sectors like healthcare and clean energy.
 - » Increases in the commercial occupancy rate in business districts.
 - » Increases in the number of businesses relocated to or expanded within Lakewood, especially those utilizing city incentives.
-

2 ECONOMIC IMPACT

- » Increases in the amount of sales and property tax revenue growth due to business activity.
 - » Increases in the number of new full-time jobs created by businesses moving to or expanding within the city.
-

3 ENTREPRENEURIAL AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

- » Increases in the participation rate of local entrepreneurs in city-sponsored programs and workshops.
 - » Increases in the retention rate of small businesses that receive city support or incentives.
-

4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE SATISFACTION

- » Increases in the number of infrastructure upgrades completed, particularly those improving business amenities and utilities.
- » Increases in the customer satisfaction rate with the city's permitting process and business support services, measured through surveys.



Objective 3: Workforce Development



Vision: To advance education and training programs aligned with industry needs, building a skilled workforce capable of supporting both current industries and future economic sectors, contributing to sustainable local employment.

This section outlines a strategy for building a resilient workforce in Lakewood that meets the demands of current industries while preparing for future economic shifts. It provides targeted recommendations to address gaps in advanced skills training, leverage partnerships with educational institutions, and enhance local employment opportunities through tailored programs. Key actions include strengthening educational collaborations, facilitating workforce development grants, improving job-matching services, and expanding apprenticeships and internships. These efforts aim to position Lakewood as a hub for skilled labor, attracting businesses and driving long-term economic sustainability.

SWOT Summary



Action Items

»» Strengthen Educational Partnerships and Tailored Training

Collaborate with California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH), Compton College, Cerritos College, and Long Beach City College (LBCC) to co-develop programs in healthcare (nursing, allied health), logistics and supply chain, and aerospace/advanced manufacturing. Include sector-based academies, adult re-skilling initiatives, and joint job fairs.

» **Case Study:** Santa Clarita has built strong formal partnerships with College of the Canyons and local employers in healthcare, logistics, and advanced manufacturing. Through sector-based academies and workforce training centers, the city delivers adult re-skilling programs, paid internships, and direct job pathways supported by joint job fairs and mentorships. These initiatives are governed by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that define shared responsibilities, curriculum development, and performance outcomes, ensuring programs remain aligned with regional workforce needs. Lakewood can replicate this model to create sustainable pipelines for local talent, integrate adult re-skilling programs, and expand work-based learning opportunities to meet employer demand.



»» Leverage Southeast Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board (SELACO WDB) and State/Federal Programs

Work with SELACO Workforce Development Board (America's Job Center in Cerritos), Employment Development Department, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to maximize grant funding. Use workshops and technical assistance to help businesses and training providers secure resources for healthcare pipelines, aerospace apprenticeships (e.g., Aero-Flex), and logistics certifications.

» **Case Study:** Cerritos demonstrates how contract cities can expand workforce capacity by leveraging the SELACO Workforce Development Board, Employment Development Department, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding. Through its America's Job Center, SELACO formalizes partnerships with training providers, employers, and colleges to build pipelines in healthcare, aerospace (Aero-Flex apprenticeships), and logistics, while offering technical assistance workshops, grant clinics, and job fairs.

By co-hosting grant workshops, supporting employer-led apprenticeships like Aero-Flex, and using SELACO's digital referral system, Lakewood can adopt this model to strengthen workforce pipelines in healthcare, logistics, and advanced manufacturing.

»» Launch "Skills-to-Industry" Hub

Create a digital job-matching hub with Southeast Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board and local colleges that connects residents to employers in healthcare, logistics, and advanced manufacturing.

» **Case Study:** Long Beach has piloted a digital job-matching hub to better connect residents with employers. Launched in October 2024, the AI-powered "Holly" platform integrates more than 45,000 local job postings and aligns with colleges and workforce boards. The system streamlines job searches, promotes skills-based hiring, and expands access to apprenticeships and internships. By embedding real-time data and sector-specific requirements, the platform improves candidate-employer matches and builds stronger pipelines into priority industries.

Lakewood can collaborate with SELACO Workforce Development Board, local colleges, and UpSkill California to establish a digital job-matching hub tailored to its strongest industries. This model will modernize Lakewood's workforce system and strengthen pipelines in healthcare, logistics, and advanced manufacturing.

»» Scale Apprenticeships & Sector Internships

Expand apprenticeships in aerospace (Aero-Flex), healthcare (Nursing 2035, [High Road Training Partnerships healthcare grants](#)), and logistics (California State University Long Beach Center for International Trade). Provide city incentives for employers hosting interns in these clusters. Tie programs to local institutions and regional grant funding.

» **Case Study:** The City of Gardena partnered with [El Camino College](#) and [Impresa Aerospace](#) to expand aerospace apprenticeships using state [Employment Training Panel \(ETP\) grants](#). The college handled grant administration while the City facilitated partnerships and incentives, enabling employers to focus on paid apprenticeships and workforce upskilling. This collaboration provided customized training aligned with industry needs while reducing employer costs through subsidies and city support.

Lakewood can adapt this model by collaborating with regional colleges and apprenticeship providers such as Aero-Flex (aerospace) and California State University Long Beach's Center for International Trade (logistics). The City should introduce employer incentives such as grants, tax credits, or technical assistance, and directly connect apprenticeship programs to state and federal funding streams (High Road Training Partnerships healthcare grants and [Apprenticeship Innovation Fund](#)).

»» Strengthen Healthcare Workforce Partnerships

Form a formal partnership with UCI–Lakewood Medical Center and regional colleges (Cerritos, Cypress, and Long Beach City College) to create a Healthcare Workforce Pipeline Initiative. Include clinical training cohorts, nursing and allied health apprenticeships, and upskilling programs for incumbent workers.

» **Recommendation:** [UCI–Lakewood Medical Center](#) is a regional healthcare anchor and a strong opportunity for workforce development collaboration. By partnering with Cerritos College, Cypress College, Long Beach City College, and the Southeast Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board, the hospital can serve as a hub for clinical training pipelines that address nursing and allied health shortages. Modeled after initiatives like Nursing 2035 and High Road Training Partnerships, this approach aligns education with employer needs and can be formalized through Memorandum Of Understandings (MOUs) for student cohorts, clinical rotations, and upskilling programs. Positioning the hospital as the anchor partner enables Lakewood to build a sustainable healthcare talent pipeline that advances residents into high-demand careers and strengthens the city's role as a regional healthcare hub.

Success Indicators

1 EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Number of new training programs developed in collaboration with local educational institutions.
 - Number of certifications or vocational programs initiated to address industry skill gaps.
-

2 GRANT FACILITATION

- Total dollar amount of workforce development grants secured by local businesses.
 - Number of businesses participating in grant application workshops.
-

3 JOB MATCHING EFFECTIVENESS

- Number of residents placed in jobs through the "Skills-to-Industry" matching program.
 - Percentage of businesses using the digital job-matching platform.
-

4 APPRENTICESHIP AND INTERNSHIP GROWTH

- Number of new apprenticeships or internships established in collaboration with local businesses.
- Retention rate of apprentices and interns in local industries.



Objective 4: Industry Cluster Development



Vision: To strengthen and grow key industry sectors in Lakewood by attracting strategic investment, promoting innovation, providing targeted workforce solutions, and encouraging collaboration among businesses supported by advanced financing tools such as Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs) and tax increment financing (TIF) strategies to drive sustainable economic growth, support job creation, and enhance community well-being.

This section presents a targeted approach to advancing Lakewood's economic future by focusing on high-impact sectors such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and goods movement. The City will work with California State University Long Beach and its Center for International Trade & Transportation (CITT), as well as community colleges and workforce agencies, to strengthen workforce pipelines in logistics, healthcare, and energy-related fields. With the Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District already established, Lakewood is now prioritizing the implementation of infrastructure and workforce investments that directly support these emerging clusters. These initiatives will include developing healthcare workforce pathways, piloting clean energy and microgrid projects, and expanding goods movement apprenticeships that connect residents to high-demand regional jobs.

Lakewood's collaborative model will engage employers, education partners, and regional agencies to guide cluster development through industry roundtables, data-driven workforce planning, and innovative financing. Together, these efforts will position Lakewood as a regional leader in sustainable, industry-focused economic growth.

SWOT Summary



Action Items

»» Create a Strategic Economic Branding Initiative

Develop targeted campaigns to attract businesses in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics, positioning Lakewood as an emerging hub for these industries.

» **Case Study:** The Economic Development Coalition of Southern California, representing five cities, rebranded as The Valley of Innovation to attract innovative industries and led to a 20% membership increase and a 300% rise in website traffic.

»» Develop and Strengthen Partnerships with Regional Economic Development Organizations

Pursue strategic partnerships with regional innovation entities that integrate public, private, and academic resources to advance growth in key Lakewood industries.

» **Case Study:** The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) acts as a regional connector linking public agencies, private industry, and academic institutions to support economic growth across Los Angeles County. By partnering with LAEDC, Lakewood could tap into regional data, industry networks, and academic resources to support growth in priority industries.

- » **Case Study:** The Long Beach Economic Partnership (LBEP) serves as a regional hub for collaboration between public, private, and academic partners to promote economic growth in Long Beach and surrounding cities. By partnering with LBEP, Lakewood could access shared data resources, participate in industry-focused events, and align with grant opportunities supporting clean energy and logistics modernization.

Establish technical assistance programs to promote business growth in industries.

- » **Case Study:** The Long Beach Accelerator (LBA) is a public-private partnership between the City of Long Beach, California State University Long Beach, and private capital investors. Focused on high-growth industries, it supports startups through mentorship, access to investors, and funding. The LBA has secured over \$1 million in federal and state grants to drive innovation and small business development. A similar strategy could extend these resources to entrepreneurs in clean energy and logistics, promoting new business formation and technological advancement.

»» Establish Industry Specific Workforce Training Programs

Align with California's High Road Training Partnerships Healthcare Grant Program to fund collaborative workforce projects in nursing, allied health, and direct care.

- » **Case Study:** Los Angeles County launched a Care Navigator Apprenticeship under High Road Training Partnerships (HRTTP) principles, working with workforce boards, community colleges, and clinics to train low-income, bilingual job seekers as care navigators. The program improved patient retention and care continuity while creating career pathways for low-income workers. By tapping into HRTTP funds, Lakewood could create similar pipelines with Cerritos College and Long Beach City College, improving healthcare access for residents while equipping its workforce with in-demand skills.

Partner with California State University, Long Beach, Cerritos College, and Compton College to create Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) pathways.

- » **Case Study:** LA County's Nursing 2035 Initiative unites community colleges and the California State University system to streamline progression from associate to bachelor's degrees in nursing, addressing critical nurse shortages and linking students directly to hospital placements. Partnering with nearby institutions would position Lakewood as a supportive hub for healthcare education and open career pathways for local residents.

»» Establish Public-Private Partnerships to Reduce Costs for Energy & Utilities

Explore partnerships with clean energy infrastructure builders to pilot microgrid and smart home communities that enhance resiliency and reduce household energy costs.

» **Case Study:** In Menifee, Schneider Electric, UC Irvine, and Southern California Edison partnered on the Energy-Smart Connected Communities project, delivering 200 all-electric homes with solar panels, battery storage, and microgrids that lowered costs and increased reliability.

Expand Business Competitiveness through Scalable Energy Programs

» **Case Study:** Across California, the Energy Action Program has provided hospitals, refrigerated warehouses, and universities with scalable energy systems that reduce costs and strengthen sustainability. Expanding access to energy efficiency tools for local employers would improve competitiveness, attract private investment, and create green jobs in the community.

Pursue energy efficiency improvements in municipal facilities, leveraging grant opportunities to reduce operational costs and reinvest in community services.

» **Case Study:** The City of El Centro secured a \$1.6 million grant with Schneider Electric to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant, cutting energy use in aeration by 29% and generating significant cost savings. Upgrading city infrastructure would reduce utility expenses, freeing resources for other economic development priorities.

Pursue California Jobs First or California Business Incentives Suite clean energy retrofit projects for retail and industrial buildings, focusing on solar, Electrical Vehicle charging, and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) upgrades.

» **Case Study:** The City of Rancho Cucamonga partnered with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development and local utilities to fund commercial energy retrofits through grants and tax credits, generating over \$8 million in private clean-tech investment. A similar initiative in Lakewood could transform older corridors into energy-efficient business zones and boost property values.

»» Establish University and College Partnerships to Promote Key Industries

Partner with California State University, Long Beach's Center for International Trade & Transportation (CITT) and local employers to create apprenticeships and internships that directly connect students with high-demand jobs in logistics and advanced manufacturing.

» **Case Study:** In Long Beach, the Center for International Trade & Transportation (CITT) collaborated with the Port of Long Beach and regional employers to design apprenticeship programs that trained students for port-related careers, providing hands-on experience and addressing labor shortages.

- » **Case Study:** California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) College of Engineering piloted a Electric Vehicle certification program in partnership with local logistics employers, ensuring the regional workforce could meet clean energy mandates. Participating in these kind of pilot programs would allow the City to position itself as a hub for innovation in goods movement and sustainability, while supporting start-ups in clean energy and transportation.

Collaborate with Lakewood High School, Long Beach City College, and California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) to create articulated pathways that move students from high school into logistics, transportation, and engineering programs.

- » **Case Study:** Long Beach Unified's pipeline programs link high schools to community college certifications and CSULB degree programs, creating seamless career pathways in STEM and logistics. This would provide local youth with clear opportunities to enter growing industries while supporting regional workforce needs.

Partner with Center for International Trade & Transportation (CITT) to provide labor demand forecasts, skills gap analysis, and employer needs assessments to align training programs with regional economic trends.

- » **Case Study:** CITT's Southern California Workforce Report has helped neighboring cities align training programs with employer demand in freight and goods movement, guiding strategic investment. Access to actionable labor data would allow the City to adapt education and training programs in real time.

Align with the California Jobs First (CJF) framework, which funds regional projects in priority industries.

- » **Case Study:** The California Jobs First Initiative, formerly known as the Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF), provides state and federal funding for local economic transformation projects. In Los Angeles County, early CJF grants have supported regional planning and cluster development through collaborations with Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC), the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator, and other industry partners. This alignment would allow Lakewood to pursue funding for clean energy, goods movement, and advanced manufacturing projects that match both regional and state priorities.



Success Indicators

1 INDUSTRY GROWTH AND INVESTMENT

- Increased number and size of new facilities or infrastructure projects in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and logistics sectors.
 - Amount of funding secured for high growth industry projects and programs.
-

2 JOB CREATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Increases in the number of high-quality jobs created in healthcare, energy, and goods movement.
 - Job placement rates for Lakewood residents in regional industry clusters.
 - Apprenticeships or internships created through the California State University, Long Beach's Center for International Trade & Transportation (CITT) and community college partnerships.
 - Measured improvement in resident participation in workforce and training programs.
-

3 INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT

- Square footage of commercial or mixed-use space developed or redeveloped within the Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District boundaries.
- Number of infrastructure upgrades completed (e.g., streetscapes, utilities, transit improvements).



Objective 5: Quality of Life



Vision: To improve public safety, expand community services, and enhance amenities such as parks and recreational facilities, making Lakewood a more attractive and desirable place for residents and businesses.

This section focuses on targeted strategies to make Lakewood a safer, more vibrant, and desirable community for both residents and businesses. It outlines actionable recommendations to address public safety concerns, improve aging infrastructure, expand community amenities, and increase community activation throughout the city. Key initiatives include partnering with law enforcement to combat property crime, upgrading public facilities, implementing clean energy solutions, and addressing homelessness in business districts.

In addition, the City will prioritize expanding family-oriented special events, walking clubs, and community programming that activate commercial corridors and public spaces. Increasing regular community gatherings and seasonal events will encourage residents to connect with local businesses, boost foot traffic, and strengthen neighborhood identity. Together, these efforts are designed to enhance Lakewood's overall livability, promote stronger community-business relationships, and support long-term economic growth and business retention.

SWOT Summary



Action Items

»» Public Safety Initiatives

Strengthen partnerships with local law enforcement to expand neighborhood watch programs, with a focus on reducing property crime in commercial and residential areas.

Implement a business-oriented property crime prevention program, offering workshops and resources to equip local business owners with strategies for securing their properties.

» **Case Study:** The City of Dana Point enhances public safety through its Business Watch program, partnering businesses with law enforcement to reduce crime. Participants receive training on recognizing suspicious activity, crime prevention strategies, and security best practices, while displaying window stickers to deter criminals and reinforce community vigilance.

Collaborate with community organizations to provide homelessness outreach and services, including mental health and employment support, aimed at reducing its impact on business districts.

Increase the presence of security personnel and surveillance systems in high-traffic commercial zones.

»»» Infrastructure and Public Amenities Improvement

Install clean energy infrastructure, such as solar panels in public spaces and energy-efficient lighting throughout the city.

» **Case Study:** The Los Angeles County Public Works' Renewable Energy Master Plan (REMP) aims to offset 100% of its energy demand through solar panels, battery storage, and hydro turbine upgrades. Generating 46 megawatts and 70 million kilowatt-hours annually, the plan enhances sustainability and modernizes public infrastructure.

Expand recreational offerings, including building multi-use sports facilities and developing inclusive, age-friendly recreational programs that cater to diverse demographics.

Partner with the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development under the Business Ready Sites Program to certify and list Lakewood's pre-zoned redevelopment sites in the state's investment database.

»»» Homelessness and Economic Stability

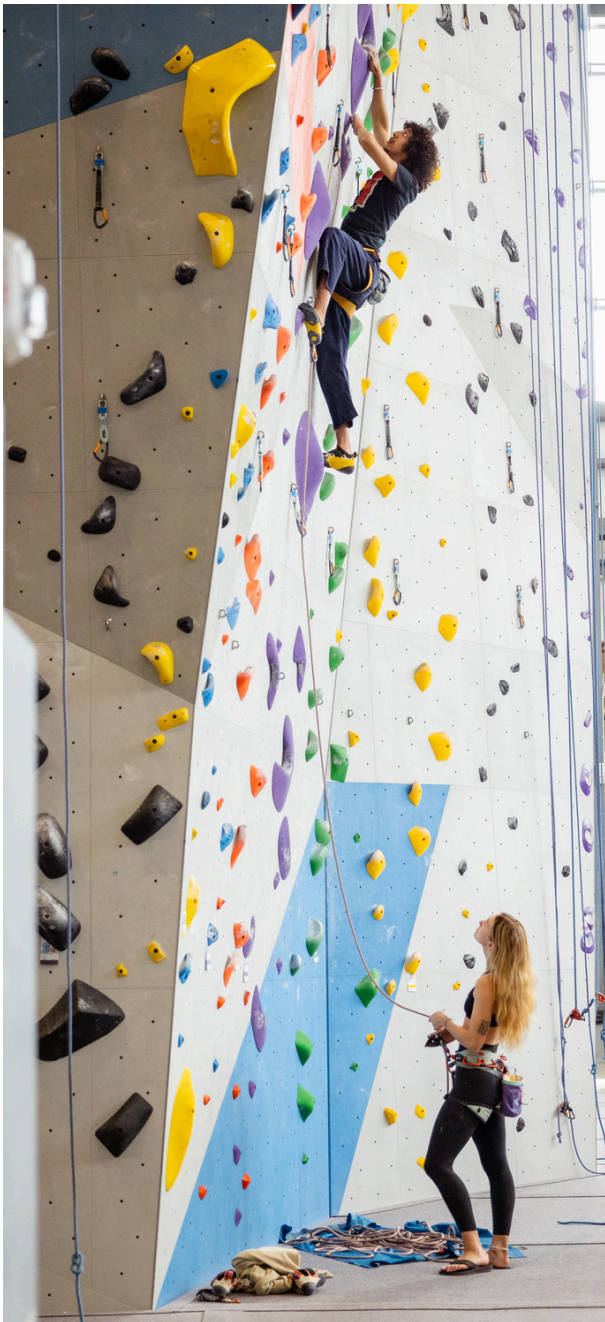
Create a task force to address homelessness by coordinating resources between local businesses, nonprofits, and social services agencies. Focus on long-term housing solutions and workforce integration for individuals experiencing homelessness.

» **Case Study:** The San Diego Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) addresses homelessness through data-driven strategies, collecting data from 700 programs and using the Clarity Human Services system to match individuals with housing. It conducts annual Point-in-Time counts, analyzes regional trends, and allocates state and federal funds based on real-time data, ensuring transparency and informed resource distribution.

»»» Community Engagement and Communication

Launch a public information campaign that highlights ongoing infrastructure and public safety improvements, focusing on how these initiatives benefit both businesses and residents.

» **Case Study 1:** The Ontario Together initiative, funded by the Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) program, addresses pollution and poverty while promoting sustainable growth. Documented in the 2023 Progress Report by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Luskin, the project engages diverse community stakeholders to create a healthier, more resilient future for Ontario.



► **Case Study 2:** The [Inglewood & Lennox Greening Plan](#) emphasizes deep community engagement in urban planning, as documented by [TreePeople](#) and [Vibrant Cities Lab](#). The initiative uses a non-traditional planning process to involve diverse stakeholders, ensuring inclusive decision-making for a more sustainable and vibrant community.

Establish a feedback loop with local businesses and residents to ensure that community needs are continuously assessed and met through city services and programs.

Improve storytelling around city projects, investments, and redevelopment efforts to better showcase Lakewood's growth and commitment to sustainable development.

Success Indicators

1 PUBLIC SAFETY

- Reduction in property crime rates in both residential and commercial areas.
- Increased participation in neighborhood watches and crime prevention programs by businesses.
- Decreases in the number of homelessness-related incidents affecting local businesses.
- Increased number of workshops and training sessions held for business owners on property crime prevention.

2 INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES

- Increased completion rate of infrastructure upgrade projects, including parks and recreational facilities.
- Increases in the number of clean energy installations in public spaces.
- Increases in recreational program offerings, particularly for under-served age groups such as teens and seniors.
- Increases in the number of events and festivals organized in partnership with local businesses and organizations.

3 HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES

- Reduction in homelessness-related complaints from businesses and residents.
- Increased number of individuals successfully connected to housing or support services.
- Increased funds allocated to businesses for crime prevention and homelessness mitigation efforts.

4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Increased public awareness of city projects and improvements measured through surveys or social media engagement.
- Increases in the number of special event activations, such as World Cup and Olympic watch parties, and measurable growth in family and community participation at these events.
- Enhanced media coverage and public communications regarding city developments and community events, measured through the number of media mentions and website traffic counts.





IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following Implementation Plan provides some more specific strategies and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each of the next 5 years, that may be used to implement the economic development plan. The prioritization of specific strategies or actions items will be determined by the City based on operational and financial capacity. Full business plans, including timeline and budget will be prepared by staff and presented to the City Council as needed.

Year 1

2025-2026

Preparing for Growth

Preparing the City for growth begins with a targeted marketing effort to create awareness about the investment opportunities available to businesses owners, real estate developers, and talented workers. Year 1 will include a targeted marketing program to create awareness about the economic development plan, existing incentives for both new and existing businesses investment, streamlined permitting processes, quality of life programs (including public safety for commercial corridors), and workforce training partnerships for employers.

Year 2

2026-2027

Launching New Programs

Launching new programs takes collaboration, planning, and approvals by the City Council to be effective and impactful. Year 2 will focus on launching the larger initiatives including identifying public infrastructure investments to attract targeted industry cluster development, securing approval for specific plans to accelerate private sector investment, securing county and state funding for major projects, and establishing public-private-education partnerships (P3) to implement major projects.

Year 3

2027-2028

Building New Infrastructure

Building major new infrastructure for business, workforce, and real estate development typically takes 2-3 years. Year 3 is expected to be an exciting year for the City of Lakewood as the groundbreaking for several major new public, private, and workforce infrastructure projects will occur. This includes commercial corridor revitalization, industry-specific partnerships with regional workforce training organizations (i.e., healthcare, aerospace, manufacturing, logistics, etc.), and first phases or redevelopment of major real estate projects like the Lakewood Center.

Year 4

2028-2029

Expanding Industry Cluster Growth

Private capital is often risk averse and follows government investment in emerging industries or new markets after momentum is established. Year 4 is projected to see the arrival of new private capital, signaling growing investor confidence in Lakewood. This year will focus on marketing success stories about government incentives, core infrastructure, and workforce assets that are available to investors and employers in key industry clusters (including healthcare, aerospace, manufacturing, logistics, etc.). Specific plans, navigational support, and partnerships with state and local government partners will make industry-specific growth in Lakewood a competitive advantage.

Year 5

2029-2030

Sustaining Growth for the Community

New business and economic development strategies for cities, particularly in emerging industries, often begin establishing their own momentum once multiple employers, public, private and educational, have clustered in a specific geographic area and begin to share workforce, core infrastructure, and supply chain resources. These changes can also create both new opportunities and demands for the surrounding community. Year 5 will be a period for evaluation, assessment, and innovation for Lakewood as it assesses the next 5 years of economic growth in a way that is positive for the Lakewood community.



Preparing for Growth

Goal: Lay the foundation for long-term business and community growth through awareness, readiness, and capacity building.

01 Implementation Approach

- » **Marketing & Awareness:** Develop a targeted campaign to introduce the Economic Development Strategic Plan to businesses, developers, and residents.
- » **Program Readiness:** Compile and promote existing incentives, permitting processes, and quality-of-life initiatives.
- » **Partnership Development:** Build relationships with workforce providers, local colleges, and public safety agencies.
- » **Internal Systems:** Audit and refine permitting workflows to improve efficiency for future projects.



02 Action Plan Initiatives

1. Launch a Façade Improvement Program and identify priority commercial corridors.
2. Conduct community outreach and organize structured meetings with businesses to gather input.
3. Develop and implement special event planning, culinary crawls, and activations, including watch parties that support local businesses.
4. Pilot a Buy Local program to promote and support small businesses.

KPI's

- Number of outreach events and participants.
- Website and social media engagement metrics for strategic plan materials.
- Number of businesses engaged in incentive or permitting discussions.
- Baseline metrics established for commercial vacancy, employment numbers, and investment activity.

Launching New Programs

Goal: Move from preparation to execution by introducing Council-approved programs and activating key financing tools.

01 Implementation Approach

- » **EIFD Implementation:** Align with key industry clusters to attract private investment in aerospace, healthcare, logistics, retail innovation, and job creation.
- » **Program Rollout:** Launch small business storefront improvement grants and workforce training programs.
- » **Zoning & Policy Updates:** Secure approvals for specific plans to accelerate targeted industry investment.
- » **Funding Alignment:** Apply for County, state, and federal grants to supplement Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District revenues.

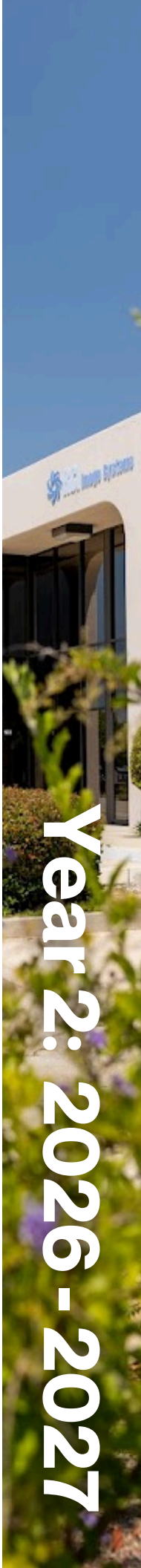


02 Action Plan Initiatives

1. Establish a Small Business Ombudsman pilot to provide hands-on navigation of City processes.
2. Streamline the business permitting process through clearer guidance and improved coordination.
3. Draft and adopt zoning changes or specific plans for industry cluster areas.
4. Develop and deploy branded outreach and marketing materials to support Buy Local pilot programs and small business development efforts, using web, social media, and direct outreach.

KPI's

- Number and value of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District-funded projects initiated.
- Number of businesses receiving storefront grants.
- Amount of external funding secured.
- Number of zoning or land-use changes approved.



Building New Infrastructure

Goal: Deliver visible, high-impact infrastructure and facility improvements to support business and workforce growth.

01 Implementation Approach

- » **Capital Projects:** Break ground on utilities, streetscapes, and transit upgrades in priority areas.
- » **Industry Facilities:** Develop training centers or shared-use spaces for healthcare, manufacturing, and logistics.
- » **Revitalization:** Ensure revitalization builds on Lakewood Center's existing role as a major economic engine.
- » **Workforce Integration:** Expand training and placement programs tied to align with industry needs.



02 Action Plan Initiatives

1. Focus redevelopment efforts on properties with aging infrastructure by identifying new commercial or mixed-use opportunities.
2. Partner with workforce providers to align training with new industry facilities.
3. Launch early tenant recruitment for redeveloped sites.
4. Coordinate public communications to highlight visible progress.

KPI's

- Number and value of infrastructure projects started/completed.
- Square footage of new or renovated industry-specific facilities.
- Number of jobs created or retained.
- Private investment leveraged by public improvements.

Expanding Industry Cluster Growth

Goal: Attract new private capital and deepen industry cluster development by showcasing early successes.

01 Implementation Approach

- » **Investor Marketing:** Publish case studies and Return On Investment data from public-private projects.
- » **Cluster Expansion:** Target healthcare, aerospace, manufacturing, and logistics companies for recruitment.
- » **Partnership Strengthening:** Continue refining public-private-education collaborations.
- » **Policy Optimization:** Adjust incentives and permitting processes based on feedback and results.



02 Action Plan Initiatives

1. Conduct a market study to evaluate redevelopment potential, including retail repositioning, mixed-use opportunities, and economic impacts.
2. Explore partnerships with clean energy providers to pilot microgrid and smart home communities that improve resiliency and lower energy costs.
3. Pursue partnerships with regional innovation entities to align public, private, and academic resources and support growth in key Lakewood industries.

KPI's

- Number of new companies locating in Lakewood.
- Number of industry-specific events hosted.
- Private investment amount in target clusters.
- Number of incentive packages awarded.

Sustaining Growth for the Community

Goal: Evaluate progress, sustain momentum, and set the stage for the next five years of economic growth.

01 Implementation Approach

- » **Performance Review:** Measure results of the past four years against KPIs.
- » **Sustainability Planning:** Identify ongoing funding streams for incentives and infrastructure.
- » **Community Integration:** Ensure economic gains benefit residents and businesses equitably.
- » **Next Plan Development:** Draft the next five-year strategy with community input.

02 Action Plan Initiatives

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of all projects, programs, and partnerships.
2. Host public workshops to gather feedback on economic development outcomes.
3. Adjust programs that are no longer meeting objectives.
4. Prepare updated Strategic Plan for Council adoption.

KPI's

- Percentage of Year 1–4 goals achieved.
- Long-term growth in property and sales tax revenues.
- Community satisfaction ratings from surveys.
- Number of sustained or expanded partnerships.



Implementation Partners



The City of Lakewood will advance economic development initiatives by engaging directly with local employers and entrepreneurs to strengthen collaboration and drive growth.



Collaborate with the California Contract Cities Association to share best practices and regional policy advocacy that support Lakewood's economic development priorities.



Partner with the Southeast Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board to expand job training and employer connections for Lakewood residents and businesses.



Collaborate with the Small Business Development Center to provide technical assistance, business advising, and resources to Lakewood's small business community.



Leverage LAEDC's regional expertise and connections to attract investment, conduct industry analyses, and promote Lakewood as a competitive business destination.



Work with IBank to access financing tools and programs that support infrastructure upgrades and economic development projects.



Coordinate with the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) to connect Lakewood businesses with state incentives and site selection support.



Partner with the California Association for Local Economic Development to access statewide best practices and technical assistance that support Lakewood's economic development initiatives.



Collaborate with Sunstone Cities to provide strategic consulting, project management, and implementation support for Lakewood's economic development priorities.

Implementation Partners



Work with the Center for International Trade & Transportation (CITT) to design workforce pipelines and research initiatives in goods movement, logistics, and supply chain sectors.



Coordinate with Cerritos College to expand career and technical education opportunities that directly serve Lakewood employers and residents.



Work with Long Beach City College to align workforce training programs with Lakewood's target industries and create pathways for local residents into high-demand jobs.



Engage with Cypress College to co-develop certification and training programs in logistics, advanced manufacturing, and emerging technologies for Lakewood's workforce.



Partner with CSUDH to connect Lakewood residents with degree-to-employment pathways and applied research opportunities in business, health, and technology sectors.



Collaborate with Compton College to provide career technical education and re-skilling opportunities for Lakewood residents in high-demand industries such as healthcare and public safety.



Engage Silverpeak as a potential private-sector partner for real estate investment, redevelopment projects, and catalytic mixed-use development opportunities in Lakewood.



Engage with Pacific Retail, as a major property owner, to advance the redevelopment opportunities at the Lakewood Center and co-invest in placemaking initiatives.



Partner with Lyon Living on housing and mixed-use projects that complement commercial revitalization and support Lakewood's long-term growth.

Financing Tools

The City of Lakewood has a strong foundation for sustainable economic growth through its recently established Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) and ongoing public-private partnerships. The City can play a powerful navigational role by connecting businesses, developers, and entrepreneurs with state and federal incentives, low-interest financing programs, and technical assistance resources already available through California and U.S. economic development agencies. By serving as a facilitator and information hub, Lakewood can help local businesses access millions of dollars in eternal funding for capital investment, workforce training, clean energy upgrades, and small business expansion.

»» Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD)

The Lakewood EIFD provides a sustainable, long-term financing mechanism for infrastructure and redevelopment projects by capturing the growth in property tax revenues (tax increment financing) within designated districts. The EIFD provides a backbone for financing capital improvements, while the City guides businesses to complementary state and federal programs to fund private development and small business initiatives.



Purpose

Fund improvements such as utilities, transportation, water and sewer systems, site remediation, and commercial revitalization in targeted redevelopment zones.



How it Works

The EIFD issues bonds backed by future tax increment, allowing immediate funding for infrastructure. No new taxes are levied, and repayments come solely from the incremental growth in assessed property values.



Key Benefit

The EIFD allows Lakewood to fund long-term infrastructure and redevelopment projects without relying on the General Fund or imposing new taxes. Because funding comes from future tax growth, it ensures that new development pays for the infrastructure that supports it, aligning fiscal sustainability with economic expansion. By establishing a reliable, recurring revenue source, the EIFD strengthens the City's ability to leverage additional state and federal funding—including the California Capital Access Program (CalCAP) and the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) programs.

»» State Financing and Incentive Programs

The **California State Treasurer's Office** offers several programs that expand access to capital and reduce borrowing risk for small businesses. Lakewood can act as a navigator and referral partner, helping local lenders and small businesses identify eligible programs and coordinate CalCAP or CCTC applications to expand access to capital.

» California Competes Tax Credit (CCTC)

Income tax credit for businesses that expand or locate in California, based on job creation and investment commitments (over \$180 million available annually).

» Small Business Lending Time Deposit Program

Encourages banks and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) to lend to disadvantaged or Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals - owned small businesses.

» California Capital Access Program (CalCAP)

Loan loss reserve and collateral support programs for lenders financing small businesses with loans up to \$5 million, or up to \$20 million for creditworthy firms lacking collateral.

» Small Business Program (SBP)

Provides up to \$4 million in direct financing for California-based firms with less than \$2 million in income.

The **Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)** administers California's largest suite of business incentives and workforce training resources. Lakewood can integrate GO-Biz programs into its business retention and attraction toolkit, providing a central point of contact for businesses seeking information on tax credits, workforce grants, and energy incentives

- » **Partial Sales and Use Tax Exemption:** Exempts manufacturers and research and development (R&D) companies from part of the sales tax on equipment purchases.
- » **Research & Development Tax Credit:** Reduces tax liability for qualified R&D activity.
- » **Employment Training Panel (ETP):** Grants for customized workforce training programs, typically \$1,500–\$2,700 per trainee.
- » **Small Business Loan Guarantee Program (IBank):** Guarantees up to \$5 million for businesses unable to secure conventional financing.
- » **Economic Development Rate Program (EDRP):** Reduces utility costs for energy-intensive firms.

»»» Federal Small Business Administration (SBA) Programs

The **U.S. Small Business Administration** offers loan and credit enhancement programs that local businesses can leverage with City guidance. Lakewood can create a “Capital Access Navigator” program, a referral service connecting entrepreneurs with local Small Business Administration lenders, Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), and Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs). This model reduces barriers to entry for new businesses and promotes sustainable expansion

» SBA 7(a) Loan Program

Up to \$5 million for working capital, equipment, or real estate.

» SBA 504 Loan Program

Long-term, fixed-rate financing for major fixed assets with down payments as low as 10%.

» SBA Microloan Program

Up to \$50,000 for start-ups or early-stage businesses, often with technical assistance.

» Disaster Loans (Economic Injury Disaster Loans)

Low-interest recovery loans up to \$2 million for physical or economic injury.

» Small Business Investment Companies (SBIC)

Provide equity or debt financing to growth-oriented small businesses.

»»» Federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) Programs

The **U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)** supports economic transformation through infrastructure, capital access, and regional collaboration. Lakewood can partner with the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and other regional entities to pursue EDA-supported grants and capital funds that align with local industry priorities such as clean energy, logistics, and advanced manufacturing

» **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF):** Provides gap financing to small businesses unable to obtain traditional loans, administered locally (e.g., Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment (PACE) Finance Corporation in LA County).

» **Implementation and Capital Grants:** Fund business infrastructure, entrepreneurial development, and workforce initiatives that stimulate private investment.

» **State-Aligned Incentives:** U.S. Economic Development Administration backed projects can combine with state programs such as the California Competes Tax Credit (CCTC), Sales and Use Tax Exclusion (STE), and Employment Training Panel (ETP) grants.

Measurement & Evaluation

Tracking performance through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) allows Lakewood to measure success, adjust strategies, and ensure continuous improvement. The KPIs span fiscal growth, industry expansion, and community satisfaction, ensuring alignment with long-term economic objectives.

»» Regular Monitoring and Reporting

- » **Monthly Task and Budget Reviews:** Assess task status and financial alignment. Assess task status and financial alignment for initiatives and KPIs selected by the City Council as priorities for implementation.
- » **Quarterly Stakeholder Feedback:** Gather feedback from business forums and community meetings.
- » **Annual Reports:** Evaluate KPIs, adjust strategies, and document progress in an annual report.

»» Continuous Improvement

- » **Quarterly Adaptations:** Make minor adjustments based on quarterly reviews and feedback.
- » **Annual Review Cycle:** Conduct a comprehensive review each year, using KPI data and stakeholder input to adjust the strategy as needed.
- » **Community Satisfaction Surveys:** Annual surveys will assess resident and business satisfaction with public safety, amenities, and city services, providing valuable data to inform improvements in implementation.



Roles & Responsibilities

»» Community Development Department

- » **Implementation Oversight:** Oversee real estate, business development, and workforce initiatives. Conduct performance evaluations and coordinate with other departments to ensure project milestones are achieved.
- » **Cross-Department Coordination:** Work closely with departments on public safety, transportation, and utilities to ensure that economic and quality-of-life objectives are met simultaneously.

»» City Council and City Manager's Office

- » **Strategic Oversight and Budget Allocation:** Approve and monitor budget allocations for each project phase, using performance data to make informed funding decisions.
- » **Community Engagement:** Participate in community forums and business council meetings to gather feedback and demonstrate support for the plan's initiatives.

»» Partner Organizations

- » Support workforce development, business advisory services, and program implementation.

This Implementation Plan provides a structured, actionable approach to achieving Lakewood's economic development goals. By setting clear Key Performance Indicators, milestones, and review processes across short-term, medium-term, and long-term horizons, the plan enables responsive, data-driven decision-making. Through targeted actions in real estate, business support, workforce alignment, industry clusters, and quality of life improvements, Lakewood is positioned for sustainable economic growth and resilience.





COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The City of Lakewood's Economic Development Strategic Plan is a forward-thinking framework that outlines how the City will grow, invest, and position itself for long-term economic resilience. However, for this vision to take hold, it must be clearly communicated, widely supported, and actively promoted. This Communications Plan is designed to ensure that all stakeholders understand and engage with the plan's goals, progress, and opportunities.

»» Objectives

Education

Ensure stakeholders have a clear understanding of the plan's goals, priorities, and expected outcomes.

Engagement

Create meaningful opportunities for community members, business owners, and developers to provide input and contribute to the plan's implementation.

Activation

Inspire action among investors, entrepreneurs, and residents to participate in programs, attend events, and champion Lakewood's economic future.

Storytelling

Increase visibility, investment, and public support through compelling storytelling showcasing personal narratives that build connection and trust.

Simplicity

Highlight one goal, action, or success story at a time to prevent information overload, and share information through a variety of trusted channels. Eliminate jargon and explain technical terms for clarity.

Branding

Apply a cohesive visual identity across all communications, including specific colors, logos, and messaging, so that Lakewood's economic development efforts are recognized.

The Communications Plan is designed to engage four key stakeholder groups: **Lakewood residents and community members**, who have a vested interest in quality of life and local growth; **business owners and entrepreneurs**, who may benefit from City programs and incentives; **investors and developers**, who seek opportunities in redevelopment and emerging commercial zones; and **policymakers and City leadership**, who shape and advance Lakewood's economic priorities through strategic decision-making.

Communication Strategies by Audience

01 Public Engagement

- » Host an official launch event in partnership with the City of Lakewood and local businesses to celebrate and discuss the plan's implementation.
- » Host quarterly town halls in each district to share strategic plan milestones and maintain direct engagement with neighborhoods.
- » Create a dedicated Economic Development Plan webpage on the City's website with easy-to-navigate sections for residents, business owners, and developers—plus a Frequently Asked Questions section and contact form.
- » Feature a success story in every issue of Lakewood Living and the Lakewood eMagazine, highlighting how an individual or business benefited from the plan before linking it to broader initiatives.
- » Conduct roundtables and workshops with local businesses and developers on topics such as storefront improvement, zoning changes, and investment incentives.

02 Business Community

- » Conduct quarterly sessions with the Economic Development Committee and consultants to review progress and strategic priorities.
- » Partner with the City to host regular workshops tied to plan components (e.g., storefront grants), always starting with a local business owner's experience.
- » Launch a business-specific monthly e-newsletter via Mailchimp, featuring updates, event invites, and a lead story focused on a Lakewood business that has benefited from the plan.
- » Actively gather feedback through newsletter prompts, the City outreach, and the City's community development webpage.
- » Offer small incentives (e.g., gift cards to local coffee shops or restaurants) for business owners who share stories or complete surveys.

03 Developer & Investor Outreach

- » Place articles and updates in regional developer newsletters and on real estate industry websites (e.g., “New Plan Opens Lakewood’s Doors to Strategic Redevelopment”).
- » Ensure City presence at relevant conferences, expos, and developer roundtables to promote available sites and programs, especially around the Lakewood Center and Auto Square corridors.
- » Highlight strategic tools like the Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District (EIFD) and alignment with key industry clusters to attract private investment in aerospace, healthcare, logistics, retail innovation, and job creation in outreach materials.

04 Elected Officials & Policy Leaders

- » Present formal briefings at City Council meetings and community advisory boards with a clear overview of the plan, funding mechanisms, and anticipated benefits.
- » Lead every presentation with a personal success story about how a Lakewood business grew, how a job was created, or how the community benefited.
- » Offer individual updates to City Council members and Los Angeles County Supervisors that connect the plan’s goals to their district priorities and constituents’ needs.
- » Develop concise memos, one-pagers, and virtual dashboards to support informed decision-making by Council members and key staff.



Measuring Success

This communications plan aims to foster widespread understanding and support for the City of Lakewood's Economic Development Strategic Plan. By engaging the community, attracting investors, and ensuring that policymakers and business leaders are aligned with the strategy's goals, Lakewood can achieve its vision of becoming a leading economic hub that offers diverse, sustainable growth opportunities.



Community Engagement Metrics

Track attendance and engagement at town hall meetings, as well as digital participation via website traffic, survey responses, and social media interactions.



Business Participation

Measure the number of businesses involved in roundtables, workshops, and direct engagement sessions.



Investment Activity

Assess the number of inquiries, site visits, and new investment commitments tied to the strategic plan.



Public Sentiment

Conduct follow-up surveys to gauge awareness and support for the strategy among the general public.

APPENDIX

Data Sources and References

American Community Survey (ACS) 2022

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>



City of Lakewood Website

<https://www.lakewoodcity.org/Government>



State of California Department of Finance - Estimates-E1 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State – January 1, 2023 and 2024

<https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates-e1/>



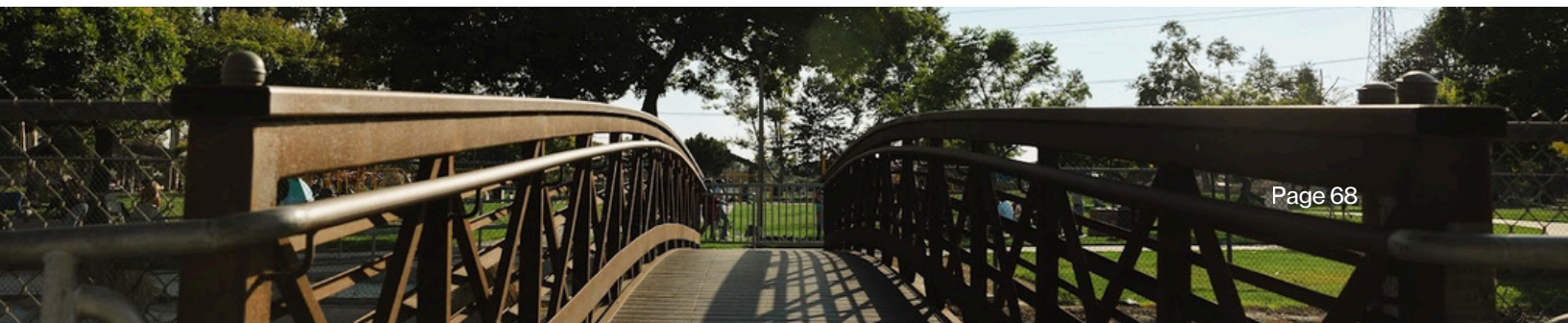
State of California Department of Finance - E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, 2001-2010, with 2000 & 2010 Census Counts

<https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/estimates-e4-2000-2010/>



Urban Institute's Community Voice and Power Sharing Guidebook

<https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/estimates-e4-2000-2010/>



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1 Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs)

Specialized lenders that provide loans and financial services to support small businesses, affordable housing, and community projects in underserved areas where traditional banks may not lend.

2 Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District

A tool cities use to fund public improvements, such as roads, parks, and utilities, by investing future growth in property tax revenue back into local projects. No new taxes are imposed.

3 Gini Coefficient

A number between 0 and 1 that measures income inequality in a community. 0 means everyone earns the same amount, while 1 means one person has all the income.

4 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Measurable goals used to track progress, such as number of new businesses, jobs created, or grants awarded.

5 Location Quotient

A measure that shows how concentrated a certain industry is in a city compared to the region or country. It helps identify local strengths or industries with growth potential.

6 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

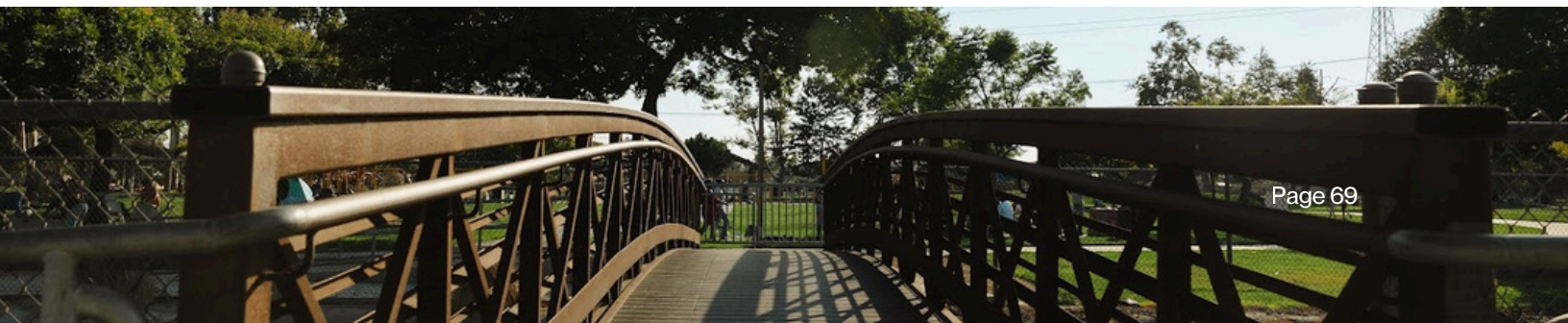
A formal agreement between two or more organizations that outlines how they will work together, without creating a legally binding contract.

7 Return on Investment (ROI) Data

Information that shows the value or benefit gained from an investment, such as increased revenue, jobs, or tax growth, compared to the cost of the project.

8 Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

A funding strategy where a city uses the increase in property tax revenue from rising property values to pay for improvements like infrastructure, public facilities, or development projects.



TEAM EXPERTISE



At Sunstone Cities, we are passionate about helping public agencies turn ideas into action. We specialize in economic development, infrastructure planning, and public-private partnerships, equipping local governments with the expertise and resources needed to launch transformative projects and drive sustainable growth.

Our team of experienced economic development professionals and municipal strategists partner with cities, counties, and special districts to identify revenue opportunities, attract investment, and build the infrastructure that powers communities. We take a data-driven, solutions-oriented approach, ensuring that every project, whether it's business attraction, infrastructure development, or strategic planning delivers measurable impact.

We offer three main services:

1. Staff Augmentation
2. Economic Development Consulting
3. Public Infrastructure Financing Solutions (PIFS).

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