

DOWNTOWN LAKEWOOD HAS A PLAN

Where's downtown Lakewood? That's a question **City of Lakewood** officials have pondered for a while now, which is why they've set course to develop a true urban core.

Approaching its 23rd year of incorporation, this relatively young city is ready to enter the next chapter with the **Lakewood Downtown Plan**. The subarea plan under the **Growth Management Act** has been in the works for more than a year. After extensive public outreach and a lengthy planning commission review, the plan is now with the City Council. At press time, a vote was anticipated as early as Oct. 1.

Fitting the puzzle together

Lakewood's mismatched and unlinked commercial areas were developed at different times under different standards before the city was incorporated. Along with **Lakewood Towne Center** (a retail center and home to city hall) and the **Colonial District** (the first strip mall of its kind west of the Mississippi when it was built more than 80 years ago, and one-time Friday night hot spot for dinner and a movie), there's also the **East Commercial District**, which includes **Lakewood Industrial Park**.

When realized, the Lakewood Downtown Plan would be a game changer for Pierce County's second-largest city. The current puzzle pieces would fit together to reflect current-day Lakewood, offering more opportunities for people to live and work in the same area, and opening the door for new businesses to develop or redevelop. The plan also calls for less pavement and more open space, including a two- or four-acre park. It's not just going to change downtown. It would create a downtown core that would bring big benefits and a wave of hometown pride for residents, and also open people's eyes beyond city limits.

"Lakewood's subarea plan is vital to the sustained economic growth of the city as it moves forward," said Lakewood City Council member John Simpson. "This is a major component in fostering economic development and redevelopment in the city and with Pierce County, and a smart step into the rest of the 21st century."

In anticipation, the city has already put infrastructure improvements in place and is pursuing economic development opportunities showcasing what Lakewood will have to offer. A separate-but-connected plan is in progress to transform Colonial Center to **Lakewood Colonial Plaza**, complete with a pedestrian promenade that could be closed down for entertainment or a farmers' market.

Approval of the plan will pave the way to tackle zoning changes to ease permitting for developers, improve the roadway around Towne Center, create connectivity between downtown districts, improve sidewalks and whatever else is needed as funding is available. Then it's just a matter of shining a spotlight on all Lakewood has to offer, from being a great place to work and live, to its ample business opportunities and affordable land, leases and housing.

Learn more about the plan at lakewooddowntownplan.org.

PORT OF TACOMA LOOKS TO DIG DEEP

Northwest Seaport Alliance (NWSA) recently took the critical first step to usher in some of the biggest ships in North America to the **Port of Tacoma**.

In August, the NWSA and the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** inked a cost-sharing agreement that calls for a feasibility study of navigation improvements to the Blair and Sitcum waterways. A big focus of the study will be on deepening Port of Tacoma waterways to make them big-ship ready.

“With the signing of these documents, we begin this project to deepen the **South Harbor** as part of our effort to develop what will be one of the deepest gateways in the nation,” said NWSA CEO John Wolfe in a press release. The partnership with the USACE, Wolfe said, is vital for building a stronger trade gateway and keeping ship calls—and the jobs they support—in the Pacific Northwest and U.S.

The study will determine if there’s federal interest in participating in the modifications. The NWSA and USACE anticipate that deepening the waterways may save time and money. There’s a potential for lower project maintenance costs, and the modifications may remove draft restrictions for certain vessels.

Megaships have made a big splash in recent years. The ships have a cargo capacity of more than 20,000 containers. At a depth of about 51 feet, Port of Tacoma waterways can accommodate ships that hold up to 10,000 containers.

AFA GOVERNOR’S AEROSPACE SUMMIT OFFERS BOLD AGENDA

Pierce County is home to thousands of jobs in the global aerospace industry. To ensure the State of Washington remains a leader in aerospace it is vitally important we work together to innovate along with **Boeing, Toray Composite Materials America, Inc., AIM Aerospace, Tool Gauge** and hundreds of other companies.



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An important way to do that is to participate in the 13th annual **Aerospace Futures Alliance Governor’s Aerospace Summit** Oct. 10. This year’s theme is **Being Bold in the Age of Innovation**.

There’s still time to get in on one of the most anticipated aerospace events of the year. The daylong event at the **Lynnwood Convention Center** will feature presentations, fireside chats and in-depth analyses. Hear from top executives in the aerospace industry with unique and insider views of the trends and developments that are changing the industry today and into the future. Winners of the **AFA Aerospace Awards** for aerospace company of the year, executive of the year and emerging leader will also be announced during the summit.

The annual event comes on the heels of the merger of the AFA and the **Washington State Space Coalition (WSSC)**. This dynamic collaboration marks a significant milestone for the space sector in Washington State, and will help to strengthen, support and advance the industry across the state.

More information is available on AFA’s website at afa-wa.com.

Teamwork is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County, Washington, USA.

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