

**LAKWOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION**  
**DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MARCH 22, 2023**  
**5:30 p.m.**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**To join the Diversity Committee Meeting:**

**By Computer:** <https://lakewood.zoom.us/j/82575411280>

**Phone Number:** 1-720-707-2699

**Webinar ID:** 825 7541 1280

(press # after entering the webinar id then press # once more to join the meeting)

**Press \*9 to Request to Speak**

(You will be prompted when to speak)

**Press \*6 to Unmute and Speak**

*Lakewood Advisory Commission meetings are public meetings where members are encouraged to attend and participate. In order to ensure productive meetings, Lakewood Advisory Commission members, as well as visiting guests, are respectfully asked to avoid grandstanding or repeating a point that has already been made, challenge ideas – not people, and to stay on task and topic.*

**AGENDA**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
  - A. Potential New Committee Member
- 4. OLD BUSINESS**
  - A. Continued Research & Learning with Guest Speakers:
    - Marika Sitz, DEI Manager, Jefferson County
- 5. NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. Discuss Next Guest Speakers – DSBO, City of Denver (April 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting)
  - B. Discuss Committee Research, [Draft Recommendations](#) and Timeline
- 6. NEXT MEETING**
  - A. Next Meeting is April 19, 2023 at 5:30 pm.
- 7. ADJOURN**

## What do other cities do?

Action	Details
Set contracting goals	The Federal Government has a goal that 5% of federal contracts will go to women-owned businesses. Goals are not quotas or mandates. They do however recognize that some businesses or disadvantaged.
Hold workshops or training sessions	These are posted on city website and held regularly with the goal of teaching interested businesses how to obtain contracts with the city.
Utilize existing resources in the community to connect W/MBEs and others to mentors, funding sources and other similar business owners.	Include links on city website to such resources.
Host or participate in small business coffee sessions or small business talk sessions.	Another way to bring small businesses together for networking while also taking the time to educate these businesses on opportunities to contract with the city.
Commission a report on W/MBEs (much like this one through various sources).	Some of the bigger cities' commission a report such as this one from consultants or local universities. If they have a program for W/MBEs they evaluate the continuation of such programs or recommend updates. We have read not only these reports and also news stories, general information on W/MBEs and attempted to make recommendations that are tailored to the City of Lakewood by a group of Lakewood residents without the high costs.
Keep statistics and publish those statistics on city website.	Cities keep statistics on contract awards. Cities track the numbers of awards made to W/MBEs both in terms of dollar amounts and number of contracts. For example, in 202x women-owned businesses received \$500,000 in city contracts from a budget of \$2Mil (25%). Hispanic-owned businesses were awarded 10 city contracts from a total of 100 (10%). This data gives the city insight into areas they may need to target or do more outreach.

## Very Preliminary Recommendations

After researching and reading information from cities large and small and extensive general information on the topic of W/MBEs, my take-aways or draft recommendation are these:

1. City should keep data on contract award (both dollar amount and percentage amount). Without data, the city doesn't know where they stand.
2. The city should engage in more outreach to more W/MBEs.
  - a. This could include reaching out through affinity groups such as:
    - i. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce <https://www.hispanicchamberdenver.com>
    - ii. Women's Chamber of Commerce <https://www.cwcc.org>
    - iii. Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce <https://www.coloradoblackchamber.org>
    - iv. Should include Veterans' groups, Asian groups, Native American groups, etc.
  - b. The city could also conduct workshops on the process of applying doing business with the city.
  - c. The city could also enhance their website through the use of language translators to achieve more outreach. The City of Boulder is a good example, but if further research is required, this could be assigned as a follow-on project to the LAC.
  - d. The city could work with the above organizations and place advertisements or links to RFPs on their sites.
  - e. Another follow-on potential assignment for the LAC is to research what are the top social media or regular media sites utilized by Hispanic-owned businesses, Black-owned businesses, Women-owned businesses and Veteran-owned businesses and then the city could place Ads/links/opportunities on these site. In the case of the Hispanic sites, maybe even place the Ads in Spanish.
3. Utilize data and programs from neighboring cities, especially Denver which is a bigger city with more resources. They maintain a list of W/MBEs. Perhaps when the city of Lakewood is reaching out to 3 firms for quotes, they could ensure at least one firm is from this list. Denver also conducts workshops; Lakewood city staff might be able to attend these Denver workshops as samples or resources as they build their own workshop(s).
4. Being an inclusive city is a deliberate, thoughtful and on-going process. As such we recommend the city set contracting award goals for themselves perhaps using Census data. These are not quotas; they are simply proportional goals in writing that make it clear that the city of Lakewood wants to include everyone in the award and distribution of city funds with the caveat that the most qualified or best value firm will be selected.
  - a. Once data is collected over a year or 2 and City Council can reevaluate. For example, by taking a deep-dive into the selection criteria. Is criteria objective? Is the selection team itself diverse? Can or should company names be removed until selection is made? Does selection rely too heavily on positive past history doing business with the city? Can the city declare a goal to award X% to firms who have never done business with the city?
5. W/MBEs often struggle to secure funding to both start and in their early years of existence, sustain their business. Perhaps the city could also bring in representatives from Small Business Administration (SBA), banks and credit unions to conduct workshops on obtaining funding.

6. Related to the above perhaps the city could host a business forum for women, minority and veteran owned businesses where they could all meet, network and share stories among themselves. Or the city could send representatives to the various chamber of commerce events.
7. During contract selection/deliberations, perhaps additional consideration (priority) is given to firms who use as sub-contractors firm who are W/M/VBEs. Perhaps this could result in mentor-protégé relationships that could develop the pipeline for more W/M/VBEs to become prime contractors.
8. The city of Colorado Springs highlights women-owned businesses on its “Visit Colorado Springs” website <https://www.visitcos.com/blog/women-owned-businesses-resources/> Perhaps Lakewood could do the same on city website as we do not have a dedicated visit Lakewood site.
9. The Pueblo County on their website explains why after 30-years of research and discussion there is still a need for programs that assist W/MBEs and Disadvantaged Small Businesses. While the data is from 2010, some things like lack of mentors and difficulty in getting funding still are reported on and discussed today. The city of Edmonds, WA also discuss on their website that small businesses are the backbone of the economy. Strengthening opportunities for small and diverse businesses not only strengthens the local economy, it supports the community, improves the quality of life for everyone and more participants increases competition and innovation while lowering costs.