

City Council Request for Legislative Modifications



Submitted on 14 August 2025, 4:55PM
Receipt number 78
Related form version 8

Council member sponsor(s) Isabel Cruz and Jeslin Shahrezaei

Enter email address to receive a copy of this submission jshahrezaei@lakewood.org

Briefly describe the minor modification being requested Councilors are proposing the creation of an independent police oversight board.

Provide history / background information that supports the request

Over the past several weeks, City Council has heard from Lakewood residents and people across the state about concerns regarding the investigation into the tragic death of beloved Denver community member and advocate for social justice and LGBTQIA rights, Jax Gratton.

This investigation has brought to light gaps in Lakewood Police's policies and procedures related to LGBTQIA community relations, specifically related to names, pronouns, understanding of community and relational nuances, and other issues. We recognize and appreciate the leadership that Chief Smith and Lakewood Police have shown by accepting accountability for these harms and their willingness to collaborate on policies to better respect and uphold standards of justice for people of all identities moving forward. Responding to Jax's family, community members and requests we would like to move this request for action to direct the City Manager and City Attorney to work with council representatives, the Police Department, and staff to establish an independent oversight committee. The Police Chief's recent public statements have highlighted a commitment from the department to do this sort of work and we are requesting Council support in reinforcing that commitment with Council action to direct staff to create a body that identifies opportunities for improvement, builds trust with marginalized communities, and promotes public safety and justice for all.

To guide the creation of the committee, goals and desired parameters are outlined below.

The objective of the oversight committee is to:

Make policy-level recommendations regarding community relations, training, and other policies and procedures to ensure Lakewood police achieve the goal of serving LGBTQIA residents and other marginalized communities with integrity, intelligence, and initiative.

Receive commendations and complaints from the community through an accessible process informed by best practices in peer jurisdictions.

Access relevant information from city agencies and officers, including having subpoena power, to issue reports and share non-sensitive findings with City Council and the public.

The oversight committee shall consist of members who live and/or work in Lakewood. Applications for the oversight committee shall be received by the City Manager's Office and applicants will be selected by the City Council screening committee. No officer or employee of the City of

Lakewood, nor any immediate family members, shall be appointed to the committee. To the greatest extent possible, the members of the committee shall reflect the diversity of Lakewood, including the ethnic, racial, and geographic constitution of the population as well as the diverse professional backgrounds, experience, and expertise of our residents of Lakewood. Committee members must have lived and/or professional expertise in one or more of the following areas:
LGBTQIA+ community issues, particularly related to transgender community members
Community safety
Victims' advocacy
Civil legal practice

The oversight committee will be responsible for setting its own policies and procedures, providing recommendations to the City Manager, Police Chief, and City Council. After 12 months, the committee will deliver a report of its recommendations and work and a proposal for a permanent, effective, and sustainable committee structure to ensure accountability and build stronger community relationships with LGBTQIA+ and marginalized communities more broadly.

If it needs expedited handling, please provide an explanation why

Councilors are requesting this be included in the 8/25/25 packet for discussion during general business.

Attach file if needed