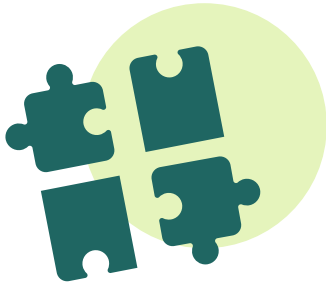OpenCities

City of Lakewood

How did the City of Lakewood launch a beautiful new website with digital services, easily managed content and included upgrades? **By selecting OpenCities.**

The problem

In 2017, the City of Lakewood, Colorado, learned its longtime website provider would no longer support the city's site. The only option the provider gave was to migrate content to the provider's new CMS for a price that was more than double the cost of acquiring a new site. Not upgrading meant running the risk of having unsupported technology.

The need

Based on Lakewood's experience with its previous custom-built website and CMS technology, the city knew it needed the following tools:

- A new website that replaced PDFs with digital services.

- A technology that made the city more self-sufficient by making it easy for staff to update not just content, but the entire website design and layout.

- A commitment from its new vendor to keep the city's digital experience current with evolving technology and ADA compliance without the need to pay for version upgrades.

"OpenCities stood out as the best solution for our needs. Our goal was to do more than just replace the old website. It was focused on creating better ways to communicate with, engage and serve residents.

The OpenCities platform and approach not only meets our needs but enables us to deliver the information and services that residents expect," said Kit Lammers, communications manager.

The process

Support for its current site was about to expire, so Lakewood moved quickly to issue a RFP, which had nine responses. After narrowing the field to four key vendors, OpenCities was selected.

Lakewood liked OpenCities' easy-to-navigate publishing experience, something that was becoming cumbersome after code on top of code was built onto its current site. Updating the website also required being at the city offices or using a remote connection that could be unreliable, so adding information about weather emergencies was challenging.

With OpenCities, Lakewood's staff would easily be able to update any content they needed, in real time, and from anywhere since it is hosted in the cloud.

As a user-tested SaaS platform, OpenCities already had many of the features Lakewood was looking for, but when staff learned that the platform was continuously tested and upgraded with no extra cost, it reinforced that they had made the correct choice. Staying compatible with browsers, devices, ADA standards and design trends was important to them.
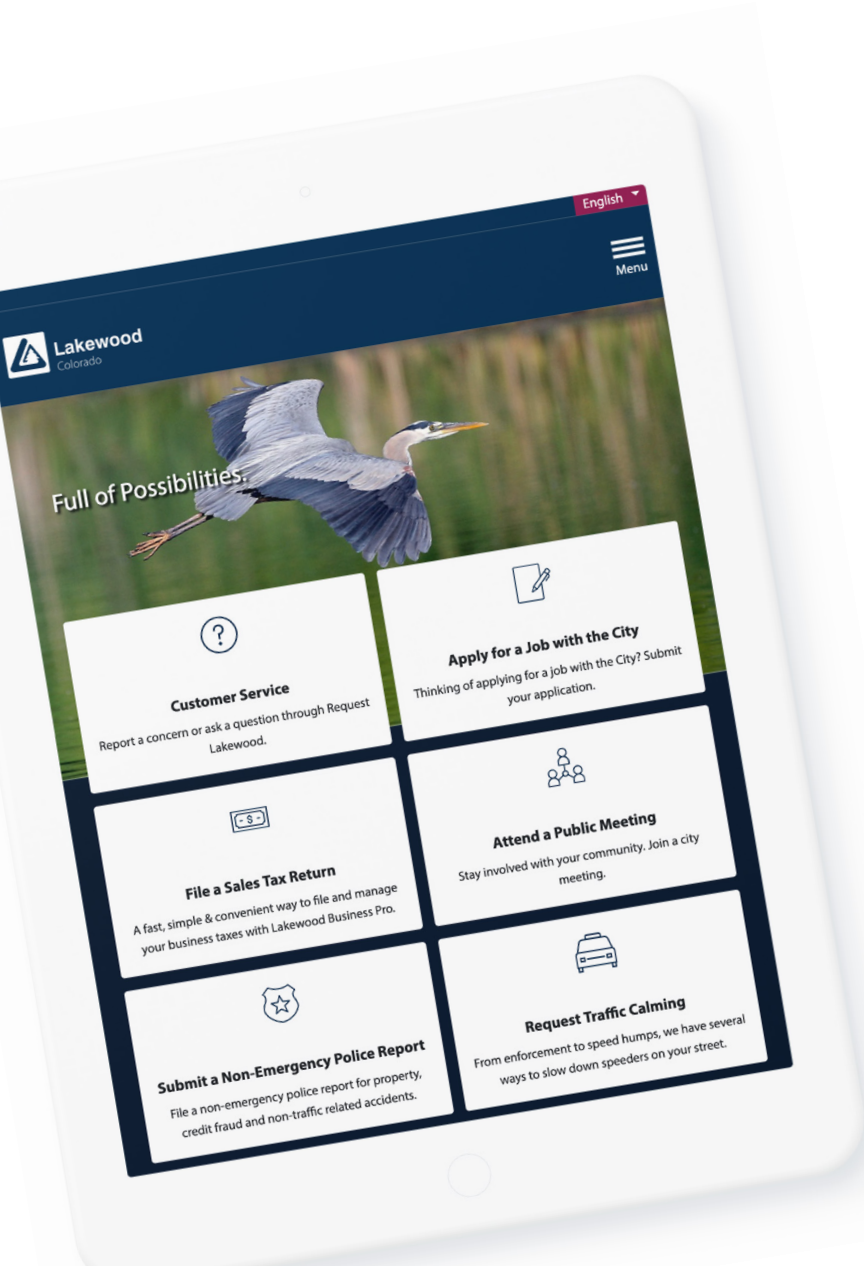
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Kit Lammers, Communications Manager

OpenCities' solution

Knowing that just migrating its content wouldn't solve the crippling functionality and difficult user experience of the website, and considering the expense of a site redesign, Lakewood decided to look for a new solution. The city wanted a Software as a Service (SaaS) solution so that its in-house IT staff would not be responsible for maintaining the code to keep it operational, and so that all web team members could access the backend of the website from anywhere. This gives staff the capability to transform the website to a digital government platform that stays current to meet changes in technology.

"Using the Software as a Service model has already benefited Lakewood. OpenCities listened to our requests for some features we needed but were not offered as part of its platform. By the time we were ready to launch, OpenCities created and released new features that serve our needs and other cities using the platform."

Kit Lammers, Lakewood's Communications Manager

Visit **lakewood.org**
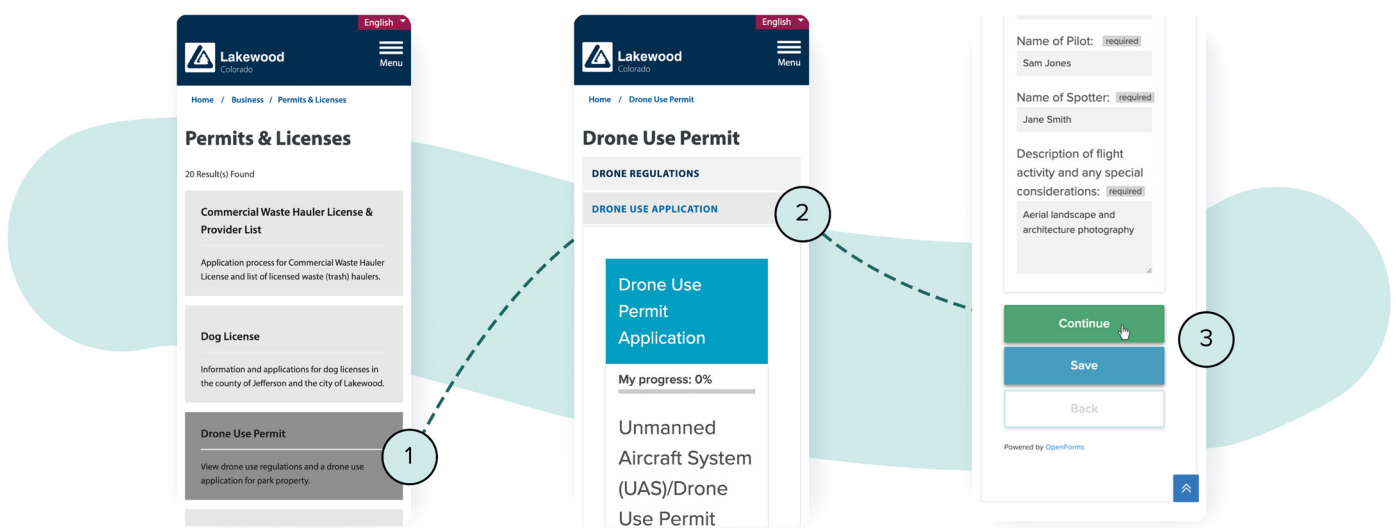
User-journey on Lakewood's new website, shown on mobile device.

Serve better.