



City of Lakewood
City Council

Council At Large
Sarah Kepple, President
Thomas R. Bullock III
Angelina Hamilton Steiner

Ward Council
Kyle Baker, Ward 1, Vice President
Bryan Evans, Ward 2
Cindy Strebig, Ward 3
Matt Bixenstine, Ward 4

Noticed 03/04/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE – PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Public Safety Committee will meet Monday March 9, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Auditorium at Lakewood City Hall, 12650 Detroit Ave. The meeting is open to the public.

The meeting will be livestreamed on the City's website at the following link:

www.lakewoodoh.gov/councilvideos

PUBLIC COMMENT PROTOCOL (Updated 4/2025)

The public is invited to comment on agenda items by submitting a written comment in advance of the meeting using the eComment platform available [HERE](#). New users must create an eComment account. Committee Chairs may also accommodate in person public comment.

The agenda is as follows:

Approval of the minutes of the October 20, 2025 Public Safety Committee meeting.

Communication from Fire Chief Fairbanks regarding Neighborhood Paramedic Program (*referred to PS July 21, 2025*)

Communication from Councilmember Strebig re-introducing an ordinance to amend Chapter 505 to create regulations regarding a trap, neuter and return program. (*referred to PS 01/20/26*)

ORDINANCE 03-2026 - AN ORDINANCE to take effect immediately provided it receives the affirmative vote of at least five members of Council, or otherwise to take effect and be in force after the earliest period allowed by law, updating various sections of Chapter 505 Animals and Fowl of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances and creating regulations for trap, neuter/spay and return of community cats within the City of Lakewood. (*1st read & referred to PS 01/20/26*)

Angelina Hamilton Steiner, Chair
Cindy Strebig, Matt Bixenstine; Members

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Individuals with disabilities who require accommodations for participation in meetings must request accommodations at least 3 business days ahead of the scheduled meeting. Contact Michelle Nochta at (216) 529-5906 or michelle.nochta@lakewoodoh.gov.



City of Lakewood
Fire Department

Ryan Fairbanks, Fire Chief
Ryan Birth, Fire Marshal

(216) 529-6656
fire@lakewoodoh.gov

July 16, 2025

Lakewood City Council
12650 Detroit Avenue
Lakewood, OH 44107

RE: Neighborhood Paramedic Program Update

President Kepple and members of City Council,

The Lakewood Fire Department respectfully requests an audience with Lakewood City Council to present an annual update regarding the Neighborhood Paramedic Program. Firefighter/Paramedic Oliver Harper will be presenting data on program usage, progress, initiatives, and potential needs of the program moving forward.

Please refer this request to the appropriate committee of Council's choosing, and coordinate with my office to ensure availability of Firefighter/Paramedic Harper.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan Fairbanks

Ryan Fairbanks, Fire Chief



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Angelina Hamilton Steiner

Ward Council
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Bryan Evans, Ward 2
Cindy Strebig, Ward 3
Vacant, Ward 4

January 20, 2026

Lakewood City Council
Lakewood, Ohio

Re: Re-introduction of Trap, Neuter, & Return Ordinance

Dear Colleagues,

This communication and the following ordinance are intended to re-introduce the topic of creating a trap, neuter, and return program for the management of community cats, a topic that I originally brought before Council via Ordinance 20-2025 after receiving thoughtful recommendations from the Lakewood Animal Safety & Welfare Advisory Board.

Ordinance 20-2025 was originally introduced and referred to Public Safety Committee on May 19, 2025, where it received several hearings before it was automatically discharged from committee pursuant to Lakewood Codified Ordinance 121.17. This provision of the Code requires all referrals more than six months old to be automatically terminated at the end of each biennium.

The ordinance on tonight's docket differs from the original Ordinance 20-2025 in that it captures changes made during committee discussion in response to resident and expert feedback. I respectfully request that Council refer the following revised version of this ordinance to committee so that we may resume deliberations where we left off.

Sincerely,

Cindy Strebig
Member of Council, Ward 3

AN ORDINANCE to take effect immediately provided it receives the affirmative vote of at least five members of Council, or otherwise to take effect and be in force after the earliest period allowed by law, updating various sections of Chapter 505 Animals and Fowl of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances and creating regulations for trap, neuter/spay and return of community cats within the City of Lakewood.

WHEREAS, Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs are endorsed by many respected animal welfare organizations as a humane and effective method of managing cat populations; and,

WHEREAS, the existing language in our Code regarding TNR programs lacks necessary specificity, guidance, and protections for those volunteers pursuing TNR as a way to manage community cat populations; and,

WHEREAS, under the supervision of the Animal Shelter Supervisor and the authority of the Director of Public Safety, the Lakewood Animal Safety and Welfare Advisory Board and its partners have successfully executed a small-scale pilot TNR program; and,

WHEREAS, lessons learned from that program, as well as other updates to the management of animals, specifically cats, are incorporated in this ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, as set forth in Section 2.12 of the Third Amended Charter of the City of Lakewood, this Council by a vote of at least two thirds of its members determines that this Ordinance is an emergency measure and that it shall take effect immediately, and that it is necessary to provide for the usual daily operation of the City; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF LAKEWOOD:

Section 1. That Section 505.02 Dogs and Other Animals Running at Large of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances, currently reading as follows:

505.02 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE.

(a) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any animals or fowl of any kind in the City shall allow or permit such animals or fowl to run at large upon any public place, or upon any unenclosed lands, or upon the premises of another.

(b) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog or cat, whether wearing a registration tag or not, shall permit such dog or cat to run at large within the City. Unauthorized entry by such dog or cat, upon the premises of another or upon any public street or ground shall constitute "running at large" within the meaning of this section.

(c) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog shall permit such dog to go or remain upon any public street or ground within the City except when accompanied by a responsible person, and upon a non-retractable leash of not more than six feet in length so as to prevent such dog from entering private property and from chasing or attacking any person, animal or vehicle; or shall fail to keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person. Any dog not properly on a leash will be considered "at large" and in violation of this section.

(d) The owner, keeper or harbinger of a dog or other animal or fowl who permits it to run at large in violation of this section shall, in addition to the penalty provided in subsection (h) hereof, be liable for all damages caused by such dog or other animal or fowl upon the premises of another.

(e) Every owner, keeper or harbinger of a female dog shall, during all times when such female dog is in heat, either confine such dog indoors or treat her in such manner as not to attract other dogs.

(f) Any land which is enclosed with invisible fencing must have its boundary no less than six feet from public property and shall be clearly marked with flags.

(g) This section shall not apply to persons operating under the guidelines of a program approved by the Director of Safety for providing for the trapping, spaying, or neutering, and releasing of cats and dogs with the purpose of reducing the unwanted stray-animal population in the City.

(h) (1) Whoever violates any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree for a first offense.

(2) Whoever violates any provision of this section in a second or subsequent offense shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree.

(3) In addition to any penalty provided under law for a violation of this section, the court shall order the offender to neuter or spay the dog within 14 calendar days of the date of conviction unless a licensed veterinarian provides evidence to the court's satisfaction that neutering or spaying of the dog is medically contraindicated.

(4) Notwithstanding the foregoing penalties, if a domestic animal or human is aggressively bitten by the dog without provocation as a result of a violation of this section, then whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree. Additionally, the court shall order the offender to complete dog obedience training within a specified period of time and provide written proof thereof to the chief.

is hereby repealed.

Section 2. That new Section 505.02 Dogs and Other Animals Running at Large of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances is hereby enacted to read as follows:

505.02 DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS RUNNING AT LARGE.

(a) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any animals or fowl of any kind in the City shall allow or permit such animals or fowl to run at large upon any public place, or upon any unenclosed lands, or upon the premises of another. Unauthorized entry by such animal upon the premises of another or upon any public street or ground shall constitute "running at large" within the meaning of this section.

(b) No owner, keeper or harbinger of any dog shall permit such dog to go or remain upon any public street or ground within the City except when accompanied by a responsible person, and upon a non-retractable leash of not more than six feet in length so as to prevent such dog from entering private property and from chasing or attacking any person, animal or vehicle; or shall fail to keep the dog under the reasonable control of some person. Any dog not properly on a leash will be considered "at large" and in violation of this section.

(c) The owner, keeper or harbinger of a dog or other animal or fowl who permits it to run at large in violation of this section shall, in addition to the penalty provided in subsection (h) hereof, be liable for all damages caused by such dog or other animal or fowl upon the premises of another.

(d) Every owner, keeper or harbinger of a female dog or cat shall, during all times when such female dog or cat is in heat, either confine such dog or cat indoors or treat her in such manner as not to attract other dogs or cats.

(e) Any land which is enclosed with invisible fencing must have its boundary no less than six feet from public property and shall be clearly marked with flags.

(f) This section shall not apply to persons while acting as Community Cat Caregivers or Trap Neuter Return Providers, as defined in this Chapter.

(g) (1) Whoever violates any provision of this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor for a first offense.

(2) Whoever violates any provision of this section in a second or subsequent offense shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

(3) In addition to any penalty provided under law for a violation of this section, the court shall order the offender to neuter or spay the dog within 14 calendar days of the date of conviction unless a licensed veterinarian provides evidence to the court's satisfaction that neutering or spaying of the dog is medically contraindicated.

(4) Notwithstanding the foregoing penalties, if a domestic animal or human is aggressively bitten by the dog without provocation as a result of a violation of this section, then whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree. Additionally, the court shall order the offender to complete dog obedience training within a specified period of time and provide written proof thereof to the chief.

Section 3. That Section 505.03 Impounding and Disposition; Records of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances, currently reading as follows:

505.03 IMPOUNDING AND DISPOSITION; RECORDS.

A police officer or the Animal Control Officer shall impound every dog and the Animal Control Officer shall impound every cat found in violation of Section 505.02, or shall impound such animals otherwise in accordance with this section.

(a) If the impounded dog is not wearing a valid registration tag, the dog shall forthwith be turned over to an officer charged by law with the custody and disposal of such dogs. If the dog is wearing a valid registration tag or the identity of the owner or harbinger is otherwise established, notice shall be given prior to or on the next working day to such owner or harbinger that the dog has been impounded. Notice may be by telephone or by residence service to the last known address of such owner or harbinger. The dog shall not be released except upon the payment of charges established by Council. Any dog not redeemed by the regular business day after notice, as herein provided, is given to the owner or harbinger, or the next regular business day following the date it is seized or impounded if the owner or harbinger cannot be found, may be sold or otherwise disposed of as provided in Ohio R.C. 955.16.

(b) If the impounded cat is wearing an identification tag or the identity of the owner or harbinger is otherwise established, notice shall be given on the next regular business day to such owner or harbinger that the cat has been impounded. Notice may be by telephone or by residence service to the last known address of such owner or harbinger. The cat shall not be released except upon the payment of charges established by Council. Any cat not redeemed by the next regular business day after notice is given to the owner or harbinger as provided herein, or the next regular business day following the date such cat is seized or impounded, if the owner or harbinger cannot be found, may be sold or otherwise disposed of in a humane manner as shall be determined by the Animal Control Officer or Animal Shelter Coordinator.

(c) In the event an animal is removed from a residence by the City because its owner is incarcerated, evicted, deceased, not found or otherwise unable to care for the animal on a daily basis, the animal may be impounded by an officer charged by law with the custody and disposal of such animals for a period of at least 72 hours, in which period the owner may claim the animal. The animal shall not be released except upon the payment of charges established by Council. The City shall leave notice at the residence of the impounding of the animal and may make other reasonable

attempts to provide such notice. If the owner or the owner's designee fails to claim the animal within the 72-hour period, the animal will be considered abandoned and the City may sell or otherwise dispose of the animal in a humane manner as determined by an officer charged by law with the custody and disposal of such animal.

(d) A record of all dogs and cats impounded, the disposition of the same, the owner's name and address, if known, and a statement of any costs or receipts involving such dog or cat shall be kept.

is hereby repealed.

Section 4. That new Section 505.03 Impounding and Disposition; Records of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances is hereby enacted to read as follows:

505.03 IMPOUNDING AND DISPOSITION; RECORDS.

A police officer or the Animal Control Officer shall impound every dog and the Animal Control Officer shall impound every cat found in violation of Section 505.02, or shall impound such animals otherwise in accordance with this section.

(a) If the impounded dog is not microchipped or wearing a valid registration tag, the dog shall forthwith be turned over to an officer charged by law with the custody and disposal of such dogs. If the dog is microchipped or wearing a valid registration tag or the identity of the owner or harborer is otherwise established, notice shall be given prior to or on the next business day to such owner or harborer that the dog has been impounded. Notice may be by telephone or by residence service to the last known address of such owner or harborer. No dog shall be released unless it has both a valid County registration as required by LCO §505.04, and an embedded microchip for identification purposes. The dog shall also be released only upon the payment of charges established by Council, reimbursement for any necessary veterinary care that was provided to maintain the life or health of the dog while impounded, and the payment of any fees for County registration and microchipping, if necessary. Any dog not redeemed by the regular business day after notice, as herein provided, is given to the owner or harborer, or the next regular business day following the date it is seized or impounded if the owner or harborer cannot be found, may be adopted to a person, transferred to an animal rescue or shelter or otherwise disposed of as provided in Ohio R.C. 955.16.

(b) If the impounded cat is microchipped, ear tipped or wearing an identification tag or the identity of the owner or harborer is otherwise established, notice shall be given on the next regular business day to such owner or harborer that the cat has been impounded. Notice may be by telephone or by residence service to the last known address of such owner or harborer. The cat shall not be released except upon the payment of charges established by Council and reimbursement for any necessary veterinary care that was provided to maintain the life or health of the cat while impounded. Any cat not redeemed by the next regular business day after notice is given to the owner or harborer as provided herein, or the next regular business day following the date such cat is seized or impounded, if the owner or harborer cannot be found, may be adopted to a person, transferred to an animal rescue or shelter or otherwise disposed of in a humane manner as shall be determined by the Animal Control Officer or Animal Shelter Supervisor.

(c) In the event an animal is removed from a residence by the City because its owner is incarcerated, evicted, deceased, not found or otherwise unable to care for the animal on a daily basis, the animal may be impounded by an officer charged by law with the custody and disposal of such animals for a period of at least 72 hours, in which period the owner may claim the animal. The animal shall not be released except upon the payment of charges established by Council and reimbursement for any necessary veterinary care that was provided to maintain the life or health of the animal while impounded. The City shall leave notice at the residence of the impounding of the animal and may make other reasonable attempts to provide such notice. If the owner or the owner's designee fails to claim the animal within the 72-hour period, the animal will be considered

abandoned and the animal may be adopted to a person, transferred to an animal rescue or shelter, or otherwise disposed of as provided in Ohio R.C. 955.1..

(d) A record of all dogs and cats impounded, the disposition of the same, the owner's name and address, if known, and a statement of any costs or receipts involving such dog or cat shall be kept.

(e) Any person who has found or trapped a dog or cat that is not wearing an identification tag or is not an eartipped cat, shall attempt to have the animal scanned for a microchip if feasible. If the person cannot promptly identify the owner or keeper of the animal, they shall report such animal to Animal Control for impoundment. Cats found running at large that are not microchipped, eartipped or wearing an identification tag are presumed to be unowned or unharbored and may immediately be subject to a trap, neuter/spay and return program.

(f) Nothing in this Section is intended to prohibit the humane euthanasia of an impounded animal prior to the expiration of the redemption period if a licensed veterinarian concludes that euthanasia is necessary because the animal is suffering where there is no reasonable remedy or relief or the animal cannot reasonably be confined because the animal is an irremediable danger to humans.

Section 5. That Section 505.06 Abandoning Animals of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances, currently reading as follows:

505.06 ABANDONING ANIMALS.

(a) No owner or keeper of a dog, cat or other domestic animal shall abandon such animal.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree on a first offense and a misdemeanor of the first degree on each subsequent offense.

is hereby repealed.

Section 6. That new Section 505.06 Abandoning Animals of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances is hereby enacted to read as follows:

505.06 ABANDONING ANIMALS.

(a) No owner or keeper of a dog, cat or other domestic animal shall abandon such animal.

(b) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.

Section 7. That Section 505.12 Specific Animal Nuisance Conditions Prohibited of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances, currently reading as follows:

505.12 SPECIFIC ANIMAL NUISANCE CONDITIONS PROHIBITED.

(a) No person shall keep or harbor any animal in the City so as to permit the commission or evidence of a nuisance as hereinafter defined.

(b) Any animal which scratches or digs in or urinates or defecates upon any lawn, tree, shrub, plant, building or any other property, private or public, other than the property of the owner or person in charge or control of such animal is hereby declared to be a nuisance.

(c) In addition to the penalty provided in Sections 505.11 and this section, the court may upon proper evidence, limit the number of animals in any single-family dwelling, or any separate suite in a two-family dwelling, multi-family dwelling or apartment within the City should the court deem that an excessive number of animals harbored within such an area constitutes a nuisance. The terms "dwelling" and "suite", as used in this section, include the lot or parcel of land on which the house or building containing the suite is located and also all out-buildings located on such lot or parcel.

No owner or keeper of such dogs or other animals shall fail to abate such nuisance by the permanent removal of such animals beyond City limits within ten days after service of such notice.

(d) On complaint of any person, police officer or the Animal Control Officer that an animal, harbored or kept in the City, damages property in the manner as specified above, notice therefor shall be given to the person harboring or keeping such animal. Failure to abate the nuisance complained of shall subject the person to penalty for violation of this section.

(e) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.

is hereby repealed.

Section 8. That new Section 505.12 Specific Animal Nuisance Conditions Prohibited of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

505.12 SPECIFIC ANIMAL NUISANCE CONDITIONS PROHIBITED.

(a) No person shall keep or harbor any animal in the City so as to permit the commission or evidence of a nuisance as hereinafter defined.

(b) Any animal which scratches or digs in or defecates upon any lawn, tree, shrub, plant, building or any other property, private or public, other than the property of the owner or person in charge or control of such animal is hereby declared to be a nuisance. This section shall not apply to a person who has reasonable control of an animal that defecates on public property or public right-of-way when such defecation is immediately removed by the person in control of the animal. This section also shall not apply to a person while acting as a Community Cat Caregiver as defined in this Chapter.

(c) In addition to the penalty provided in Sections 505.11 and this section, the court may upon proper evidence, limit the number of animals in any single-family dwelling, or any separate suite in a two-family dwelling, multi-family dwelling or apartment within the City should the court deem that an excessive number of animals harbored within such an area constitutes a nuisance. The terms "dwelling" and "suite", as used in this section, include the lot or parcel of land on which the house or building containing the suite is located and also all out-buildings located on such lot or parcel.

An owner or keeper of such dogs or other animals shall abate such nuisance by the permanent removal of such animals beyond City limits within ten days after service of such notice.

(d) On complaint of any person, police officer or the Animal Control Officer that an animal, harbored or kept in the City, damages property in the manner as specified above, notice therefor shall be given to the person harboring or keeping such animal. Failure to abate the nuisance complained of shall subject the person to penalty for violation of this section.

(e) Whoever violates this section is guilty of a minor misdemeanor.

Section 9. That new Section 505.25 Trap, Neuter and Return of Community Cats of the Lakewood Codified Ordinances, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

505.025 Trap Neuter and Return of Community Cats

(a) Definitions. For purposes of this Chapter, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Community Cat" is a member of the domestic species *Felis Catus* and shall mean a free-roaming cat who may be cared for by one or more residents of the immediate area who is/are known or unknown; a community cat may or may not be feral. Community Cats are not wildlife.

(2) "Community Cat Caregiver" is a person who, in accordance with and pursuant to a Trap Neuter Return program as described herein, provides care, including food and shelter or medical care to a Community Cat.

(3) "Eartipping" is the removal of the distal one-quarter of a Community Cat's left ear, which is approximately 3/8 inch in an adult and proportionally smaller in a kitten under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. Eartips are designed to identify a Community Cat as having been sterilized and vaccinated for rabies.

(4) "Trap Neuter Return" is the process of humanely trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating for rabies, eartipping and returning a Community Cat to its original location, including trapping to provide medical care.

(5) "Trap Neuter Return Provider" is a person who, in accordance with and pursuant to a Trap Neuter Return program as described herein, provides care, including food and shelter or medical care to a Community Cat including the trapping, spay or neuter, and return of a Community Cat.

(b) Permitted Acts:

(1) All Trap Neuter Return Providers shall comply with Chapter 505. Community Cat Caregivers and Trap Neuter Return Providers are obligated to educate themselves on humane standards and compliance with the law through regular training.

(2) Community Cat Caregivers and Trap Neuter Return Providers shall not be subject to prosecution for violation of Sections 505.02, 505.06, or 505.12 of this Chapter.

(3) A person who sets a trap that is capable of capturing a cat or kitten shall not leave such trap without direct monitoring of the trap. This is a strict liability offense and strict liability is a culpable mental state for purposes of section 2901.20 of the Revised Code. The designation of this offense as a strict liability offense shall not be construed to imply that any other offense, for which there is no specified degree of culpability, is not a strict liability offense.

(4) A person who uses a live trap to capture a cat or kitten for Trap Neuter Return or any other purpose shall not leave such cat or kitten in the live trap for more than 24 consecutive hours. This is a strict liability offense and strict liability is a culpable mental state for purposes of section 2901.20 of the Revised Code. The designation of this offense as a strict liability offense shall not be construed to imply that any other offense, for which there is no specified degree of culpability, is not a strict liability offense.

(5) Community Cat Caregivers and Trap Neuter Return Providers may reclaim impounded Community Cats without proof of ownership for the purpose of providing care or returning eartipped Community Cats to their original locations.

Section 10. It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all deliberations of this Council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal actions were

in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Section 11. That this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure for the reasons set forth in the preamble to this Ordinance, and provided it receives the affirmative vote of at least two thirds of its members, this Ordinance shall take effect and be in force immediately upon its adoption by the Council and approval by the Mayor otherwise; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force after the earliest period allowed by law.

Adopted: _____

Sarah Kepple, President of Council

Maureen M. Bach, Clerk of Council

Approved: _____

Meghan F. George, Mayor