



40 West Arts Celebrates its 10-Year Anniversary in 2021

The district will host Covid-safe virtual and live programming throughout 2021 in recognition of 10 years

LAKEWOOD, Colo. (February 23, 2021) - 40 West Arts, Lakewood's only Colorado Creative Industries state-certified arts district celebrates its 10-year anniversary in 2021. 40 West Arts formed as a non-profit organization on July 7, 2011, and will host a series of events (both virtual and in-person), programs and contests throughout the Spring and Summer of 2021 to mark a decade in existence.

The notion for an arts district along Lakewood's historic West Colfax Avenue dates back to 2004, during community meetings held to brainstorm ideas for recovery efforts along the corridor, which had fallen into a 30+ year period of economic decline due to rerouted traffic patterns along both I-70 and Highway 6. In January 2006 the West Colfax Action Plan was adopted by Lakewood's City Council and the concept of an arts district was solidified.

The ensuing years brought exponential success with the opening of 40 West Gallery in 2012, state certification from Colorado Creative Industries in 2014, and the launch of major programs including Artist in Residence, West Colfax MuralFest (later re-named to Colfax Art Fest), Colfax Art Crawls, First Friday openings and more. In 2015 40 West Arts opened 40 West Studios, which provides affordable studio space for creatives, and welcomed a number of galleries and creative spaces to the district core in subsequent years including Lakewood Arts (Lakewood's oldest continuously operating arts organization), Pirate: Contemporary Art, NEXT Gallery and THIS Print Design.

In 2018 the district launched one its biggest projects to-date, the 40 West ArtLine, a walkable, bikeable free outdoor art experience featuring large-scale installations, multiple ground and wall murals, fence art, temporary exhibitions and more. This amenity, which is a partnership with the City of Lakewood and Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District, continues to act as a catalyst for the artistic transformation of the West Colfax corridor.

"It's been an incredible journey," says 40 West Board Chair Bill Marino. "We couldn't have realized our vision without the support of our many partners including local neighborhood organizations, passionate business owners and of course, the City of Lakewood. 40 West Arts is truly an example of a from-the-ground-up movement and this is just the start. We're excited to see what the next 10 years bring."

Alongside 10 incredible years for 40 West Arts, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) just awarded a \$10 million grant to the City of Lakewood to implement the West Colfax Pedestrian Safety project. This project is one of 30 others funded in the metro area by \$58.9 million in grant as part of state's Safer Main Streets Initiative. Lakewood's grant application was selected by DRCOG to address pedestrian and traffic issues along West Colfax Avenue. 40 West Arts and its partners the Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District and West Colfax Community Association are thrilled to support the City of Lakewood in this new endeavor.

Visitors to the district should keep an eye out for a slate of virtual and in-person programming to begin in April of 2021 and extend through late summer. Interviews from early founders, contests, art giveaways, events and more are planned throughout the coming months.

For further information, contact 40 West Arts at 303-275-3430 or at info@40westarts.org.



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About 40 West Arts: (SHORT)

40 West Arts is a non-profit, state-certified creative district along Lakewood's historic West Colfax Avenue with the mission of energizing our community through arts experiences, exhibitions, and events that engage the whole family. 40 West Arts is home to an ever-growing number of creative venues and also includes the 40 West ArtLine (40WestArtLine.org), a four-mile walkable, bikeable outdoor arts experience. 40 West Arts is a top westside destination. More info at 40WestArts.org.

About 40 West Arts: (LONG)

40 West Arts is a non-profit, state-certified creative district along Lakewood's historic West Colfax Avenue with the mission of energizing West Colfax through arts experiences, exhibitions, and events that engage the whole family. 40 West Arts is home to an ever-growing number of creative venues, from live performances at Benchmark Theatre to cutting-edge contemporary art at Edge Gallery, Next Gallery, Pirate: Contemporary Art and others. The district includes the campus of Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design and the popular Mexican-themed entertainment restaurant Casa Bonita, a national top-ten roadside destination. A new amenity in the district is the 40 West ArtLine (40WestArtLine.org), a four-mile walkable, bikeable outdoor arts experience funded in part by the National Endowment for the Art and the Lakewood-W. Colfax BID. The ArtLine intersects three parks and comprises 70+ art installations including sculptures, murals, fence art, interactive games and more. Visit 40 West Arts during its monthly First Friday opening receptions, quarterly Colfax Art Crawl events and Colfax ArtFest, a two-day festival featuring live music, art happenings, creative vendors, food trucks, craft beer and more. Whether for its arts experiences, creative venues and public art, eclectic eateries or micro brews, 40 West Arts is a top westside destination. More information is available at 40WestArts.org.