Aurora commits to creating more affordable housing

The city of Aurora's commitment to increase affordable housing within the next three years was recently accepted by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) as part of its implementation of Proposition 123.

Proposition 123 was passed by Colorado voters in 2022 and provides a dedicated revenue source to communities that commit to creating affordable housing units. The funding that will be provided to the city of Aurora will depend on additional program applications submitted to and accepted by DOLA and the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and International Trade.

In January 2023, Aurora City Council passed a resolution affirming the city’s commitment and desire to receive funds from the Statewide Affordable Housing Fund. The city has committed to creating 550 units per year for three years, for a total of 1,650 new affordable housing units, by Dec. 31, 2026.

“We know that affordable housing is not a unique issue to Aurora," said Jessica Prosser, Aurora's Housing and Community Services Director. “But at a local level, the financial resources coming from Proposition 123 will be incredibly important in helping close the gap of affordable housing units in Aurora.”

In December 2020, the city adopted the Aurora Housing Strategy, which identified a gap of over 7,500 affordable housing units and has been working to allocate available resources toward closing the affordable housing gap, including gap financing through loans for developers interested in creating and/or preserving affordable housing. Since adopting the housing strategy, the city has created over 2,000 new affordable housing units, such as the most recent projects of Sapling Grove Apartments and Liberty View Apartments.

Upcoming Aurora City Council Town Meetings

This publication went to print in early September. Please call 303.739.7015 or visit AuroraGov.org/TownMeetings to confirm details (hybrid meeting links are available on the webpage).

To look up your council member and view the council ward map, visit AuroraGov.org/PropertyInfo.

Ward I Town Meeting
Council Member Crystal Murillo
- Oct. 26, 6-7:30 p.m.
  Moorhead Recreation Center (hybrid)

Ward II Town Meeting
Council Member Steve Sundberg
- Oct. 19, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Central Recreation Center (hybrid)

Ward III Town Meeting
Council Member Ruben Medina
- Oct. 4, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Aurora Center for Active Adults
- Nov. 1, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Aurora Municipal Center, Aurora Room

Ward IV Town Meeting
Council Member Juan Marcano
- Oct. 12, 6:30-8 p.m.
- Nov. 9, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Colorado Early Colleges (hybrid)

Ward V Town Meeting
Council Member Alison Coombs
- Oct. 17, 6-7:30 p.m.
  Heather Gardens Clubhouse
- Nov. 18, 10:30 a.m.-noon
  Mission Viejo Library

Ward VI Town Meeting
Council Member Françoise Bergan
- Nov. 15, 6-8 p.m.
  Tallyn’s Reach Library

Meet with Mayor Mike
Mayor Mike Coffman
- Oct. 21, 2-3:30 p.m.
  Aurora Central Library
The public is invited to attend a hybrid community meeting Tuesday, Oct. 24, regarding ongoing progress related to the city’s public safety reform efforts under a consent decree with the Colorado Attorney General’s Office.

IntegraSure, operating as the Independent Consent Decree Monitor, will post its fifth and latest report Oct. 15 at AuroraMonitor.org in advance of the meeting.

The Community Advisory Council—a group of prominent community leaders that the Independent Consent Decree Monitor convened to offer community input and guidance regarding the city’s reform efforts—is hosting the Oct. 24 meeting to provide information on progress being made under the monitorship.

To participate, attend the meeting in person at 6 p.m. in the Aurora Municipal Center’s Paul Tauer City Council Chamber, 15151 E. Alameda Parkway, or via the virtual platform link that will be available at AuroraGov.org/ConsentDecree. The meeting also may be watched live on Comcast Cable Channels 8 or 880, at YouTube.com/TheAuroraChannel or at AuroraTV.org.

During the meeting, the Independent Consent Decree Monitor, Jeff Schlanger, will provide an overview of the fifth reporting period. Dr. Robin Engel from the National Policing Institute, who is part of the monitoring team, will present the Aurora Police Department’s enforcement data from 2017-22.

The public is encouraged to submit questions and comments in advance by email to connect@auroramonitor.org or via the Contact Us form at AuroraMonitor.org no later than Friday, Oct. 20.

AuroraMonitor.org provides an overview of the monitorship, the monitoring team, the Community Advisory Council, key dates in the monitoring process, reports and helpful resources. Community input is welcome throughout the monitorship via email at connect@auroramonitor.org or the Contact Us form on AuroraMonitor.org.

Visit YouTube.com/TheAuroraChannel or AuroraTV.org after the meeting to view the meeting recording.

Additional information on the Aurora Consent Decree is available at AuroraGov.org/ConsentDecree.

Questions and comments welcome at Oct. 24 meeting on city’s efforts under consent decree monitorship

Aurora Municipal Court now allows for online warrant search

The Aurora Municipal Court has rolled out a new online warrant search that allows people to check on outstanding warrants without having to visit or call the court, part of ongoing efforts to increase transparency and customer service for residents.

“As a court, we want to make it clear and simple for people to comply with warrants and, by extension, ease the burden upon law enforcement,” Aurora Court Administrator Candace Atkinson said.

The warrant search is available at AuroraGov.org/Courts. Residents can still request a warrant check in person at the Aurora Municipal Court, 14999 E. Alameda Parkway, or by phone at 303.739.6455 or 303.739.6444.

To further improve customer service, the Aurora Municipal Court can now take partial payments online after a case has come to a disposition, and is sending reminder emails related to court dates, due payments, issued warrants and such.

The Aurora Municipal Court presides over violations of the Aurora Municipal Code, including traffic summonses and complaints, parks and open space offenses, city-code criminal offenses, neighborhood code compliance violations, overweight commercial truck offenses, animal services violations, and fire department-related offenses.

Election Day coming Nov. 7

Starting Oct. 16, ballots for the coordinated election will start arriving in mailboxes. Voters will fill seats Nov. 7 for Aurora Mayor and City Council Wards IV, V and VI and two At-Large positions. Ballots must be received by 7 p.m. Election Day Nov. 7 to be counted.

Links to ballot drop-off locations in each county are located on the Voter Resources section at AuroraGov.org/Elections.

For county voter resources, visit ArapahoeVotes.com, AdamsVotes.com or DouglasVotes.com, depending on the county in which you live.

Aurora recognizes volunteers and organizations with Community Spirit Awards

The city of Aurora and local organizations rely on the generosity and service of volunteers to improve the community. In fact, in 2022, more than 800 individuals donated over 22,000 volunteer hours serving city of Aurora programs, equating to over $700,000 worth of labor. Recently, the city recognized 24 community volunteers and five organizations with Community Spirit Awards for helping make Aurora a great place to call home.

View the list of 2023 award recipients at AuroraGov.org/CommunitySpiritAwards. To find out volunteer opportunities at the city of Aurora, visit AuroraGov.org/Volunteer.
City celebrates Civic Engagement Academy graduates

As summer wrapped up, the city of Aurora celebrated the graduation of 25 residents from its Civic Engagement Academy, an eight-week program that helps residents deepen their knowledge of the city and its operations. The program develops and cultivates leaders in the community and provides insights into the City Council’s decision-making process.

Congratulations to the 2023 Civic Engagement Academy graduates:

Earle Anderson, Edna Arellano-Flores, Angela Chavez, Estela Conchas, Juliana Davis, David Duchan, John Egbert, Jasmin Garcia, Rachael Gentry, Talonnie Granger, Jameri Hartsfield, Ray Johnson, Leialoha Johnson-Hagmoc, David Lee, Lindsay Lester, Christine Maggio, Matthew Moncada, Jay Spencer, Patricia Stephens, Julie Stewart, Tanya Tabacheck, Yessenia Tostado, Glen Wagner, Seth Watkins and Lorraine Wiegand.

Topics covered in this year’s academy included Aurora’s form of government, the city’s budget and charter, planning and development, Aurora water, housing and community services, Aurora police, and immigrant and refugee programs.

Dates for the 2024 Civic Engagement Academy will be posted at AuroraGov.org/CivicAcademy and announced on city communication channels once they are scheduled. For questions, contact Johnathan Harris at jmharris@auroragov.org or call 303.739.7923.

Aurora Public Library is hosting a fancy fiesta fundraiser with a Día de los Muertos theme in November.

The inaugural Catrina Ball, named after a symbol of Day of the Dead celebrations in Mexican culture, will feature live music, dancing, dinner and libations to celebrate life and support a great cause.

The event from 6:30 to 10 p.m. Nov. 4 will take place inside the Aurora Central Library, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway, with a festive atmosphere of larger-than-life Catrinas and Calaveras, traditional decorations and many surprises. This unique experience will be the first of its kind in Aurora.

Dress up for the occasion (black tie with a Catrina twist) and join this special, limited-ticket fall event.

To learn more and purchase tickets, visit CatrinaBallAurora.org.

Halloween, a time of spooky delight, brings with it some cautions for our furry friends. Here are some quick tips from the Aurora Animal Shelter to ensure their safety.

1. Costume Comfort: While dressing up pets is fun, prioritize their comfort. Ensure costumes don’t hinder movement or cause overheating.

2. Candy Check: Many Halloween candies are harmful to pets. Chocolate, xylitol, raisins, and nuts can be toxic. Keep treats out of reach and help educate others about the dangers of sharing candy with pets.

3. Doorbell Distress: Constant doorbell ringing can stress pets. Create a quiet space away from the front door where they can feel secure amidst the chaos.

4. ID and Safety: Ensure pets have proper identification and a microchip with updated details. The Aurora Animal Shelter can microchip your pet for $10 on a walk-in basis, and also scan and check microchips for proper functioning.

5. Socializing Sensibly: Some pets enjoy social activities, while others get anxious. Monitor their behavior and remove them from stressful situations.

6. Emergency Readiness: Know the nearest 24/7 vet clinic. Recognize signs of distress like vomiting, diarrhea or lethargy. Act promptly if you suspect something’s wrong.

If you are thinking about adopting, the Aurora Animal Shelter in November is offering 50% off on adult dogs and cats (six months and older). The shelter is also looking for volunteers to help with fostering, cleaning kennels and much more.

For more information, visit AuroraAnimalShelter.org, call 303.326.8280 or email animalservices@auroragov.org.

The city’s Housing and Community Services Department is preparing for the snow season by recruiting volunteers for the Snow Busters program.

This program pairs volunteers with people who live within three miles of them, are incapable of shoveling after a snowfall due to age, disability or other conditions, and have limited financial resources.

To volunteer as a Snow Buster, you must:

• Commit to assisting the resident in need for an entire snow season, beginning in the fall and ending in the spring.
• Shovel the public sidewalk of the resident within 24 hours of a snowfall of two (2) inches or more.
• Be 14 years of age or older.
• Pass a background check.

Volunteers commit to helping one person for one snow season. This is a great volunteer project for families, church groups, scout troops, and other groups.

Apply today at AuroraGov.org/Volunteer. Call 303.739.7280 with questions.
Landscape award winners announced

This year, we have three water-wise winners for our annual Water-wise Landscape Award. This award recognizes customers who are committed to conserving Aurora’s water resources by installing a low-water landscape.

Thomas and Kathie Olmsted won first place, Karen German won second place and Diane Wells won third place in this year’s contest. Recipients received credits on their water bills and the right to brag about their efficient landscapes. To view all three winners’ landscapes, visit AuroraGov.org/LandscapeAward.

Credit card fees have begun

All credit card transactions for water bill payments now have a transaction fee of $1.95 for residential customers and a transaction fee of $7.95 for commercial, multifamily and irrigation accounts. Credit card processing fees were projected to increase to almost $2 million each year. Help us control these costs and their impact on rates by switching your online payment account to use the ACH or eCheck option, which will continue to have no charge.

Go to AuroraGov.org/PayMyBill to access your online water account.

FREE paint recycling available

We all know paint colors can affect your mood but how are you feeling about the leftover paint piling up in the garage? Clear your mind and your space through the free PaintCare program. Unused paint, stain and varnish can be returned to many of the locations where it was purchased.

For information and a list of locations, visit PaintCare.org/Colorado. Be sure to contact the PaintCare drop-off site beforehand to confirm hours and availability before dropping off items.

Easily recycle household chemicals

Take a load off with Waste Management’s (WM) At Your Door Curbside Collection program. For just $10, not only can you do something positive for the environment, but you can also safely dispose of potentially hazardous or hard-to-recycle household chemicals such as lawn care products, pesticides, motor oil and more.

For a list of accepted items, visit WMAtYourDoor.com/resident. WM offers a limited number of appointments each month. To schedule a pickup, call 800.449.7587.

Helpful online tips protect homes from water damage

Aurora Water’s homeowner resources webpage provides seasonal checklists for preventative maintenance items, winter water pipe protection protocols, water shutoff valve identification and how to check your household water fixtures for efficiency. AuroraGov.org/HomeOwnerResources is a good reference to minimize damage when you’re investigating plumbing problems and making repairs.

Get a GRIP on your grass

Join us in saving water and money by installing a water-wise landscape through the Grass Replacement Incentive Program (GRIP). This program will be structured in two cohorts – one in the fall and the other in the spring. Aurora Water wants to help you get an attractive, lower-maintenance yard that can withstand drought and provide a habitat for pollinators. You’ll also receive a rebate of up to $4,000. The application for the next cohort goes live on Nov. 1. To apply, fill out an application form and submit three to five photos of the grass in your front yard during the cohort’s application time frame.

For more information on the program’s requirements and manual, go to AuroraGov.org/GRIP.