Construction begins on long-awaited I-70 Picadilly Interchange Project

A new interchange on Interstate 70 in northeast Aurora will transform regional connectivity, increase mobility, reduce congestion, and improve safety for Aurora and beyond once it is complete in late 2025.

The city of Aurora is leading this nearly $100 million project, which is supported by partners like the Colorado Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Adams County, and the Aerotropolis Regional Transportation Authority.

Following a groundbreaking ceremony in August, construction began on the project to extend Picadilly Road between Colfax Avenue and Smith Road via an interchange onto I-70 in Aurora. Improved north-south connectivity will unlock a roadway network to improve access to world-class residential, commercial, and industrial developments and make Picadilly Road a key arterial point for the region.

The project will feature a diverging diamond interchange design, with enhanced safety measures, including advanced signaling systems, wider lanes and improved lighting that will reduce risks to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists.

A new bicycle and pedestrian path through the interchange will also provide safe and accessible infrastructure for the northeast metro area, and improve safety and quality of life for non-motorized users.

A $25 million federal grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation is helping fund the interchange, along with financial support from the city and the Aerotropolis Regional Transportation Authority.

To learn more about the project and sign up for weekly information updates, visit AuroraGov.org/I70Picadilly.
Explore what’s new at the museum

Two new exhibits at the Aurora History Museum make it a great time to visit one of the city’s hidden gems.

In conjunction with the New American Arts Festival, the Aurora History Museum will host a community voices exhibit, “Reflections on War and Peace,” from Sept. 5 to Oct. 8. The project highlights Aurora residents’ ideas on what “war” and “peace” mean to them personally.

Aurora-based Roshni, an arts organization that presents new and diverse voices through original productions, organizes the annual New American Arts Festival happening over several days in September. Visit RoshnIsLight.org/Events for details.

“Beyond the Storefront: A Journey Through Aurora’s Business Past,” open now through Nov. 5, celebrates our city’s businesses and industries.

For over 130 years, business drove Aurora’s growth from a small Denver suburb to the third-largest city in Colorado. Discover old and new businesses that helped shape Aurora’s history.

The Aurora History Museum, 15051 E. Alameda Parkway, is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. More information on these exhibits is available at AuroraMuseum.org.

“Trolley Trailer No. 610” exhibit returns

In response to museum visitor feedback, Aurora History Museum curators will re-install “Trolley Trailer No. 610,” a fan-favorite past exhibit.

Originally on display in 2010 while volunteers worked diligently to restore the city’s now beloved landmark streetcar, this exhibit will return in preparation for the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the museum’s Ruth Fountain Trolley Gallery.

The revived exhibit, which will be on display from October 2023 through September 2024, will feature new content and interpretation, building upon the display that once graced the museum’s walls some 13 years ago.

Tickets on sale for Veterans Salute event

Save the date for the city of Aurora’s annual Veterans Salute on Monday, Oct. 30. Join us in honoring our veterans at the Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center, 13200 E. 14th Place. This year’s event will include a formal ceremony and a luncheon.

Tickets cost $15 and are on sale now at AuroraGov.org/Salute or by calling the Aurora Center for Active Adults, or Beck, Central, Moorhead or Southeast recreation centers. For more information about the event, visit AuroraGov.org/Salute.

¡Celebra! Hispanic Heritage Month

From Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, we celebrate the histories, cultures and contributions of those who came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. Nearly 30% of Aurora’s population is of Hispanic or Latino origin. The people from this community who call Aurora home come from all walks of life and have their own individual stories of immigration or a long family history that predates Colorado statehood.

Join the city of Aurora for a unique celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month at 6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15, at Aurora Central Library, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway. Enjoy a Catrina exhibit, food and beverages from various countries, live music and performances. No registration is required. Learn more at AuroraLibrary.org.

The event is hosted by Aurora Public Library and the city’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs, in partnership with Denver Botanic Gardens.

NEW photo speed enforcement pilot program now active

As part of the city of Aurora’s commitment to public safety, the Aurora Police Department launched a City Council-approved photo speed enforcement pilot program. The goal of this new program is to make the city’s roadways safer for all road users.

Prior to the conclusion of the program in August 2024, an analysis will be conducted to determine the effectiveness and impact of the program and if it should be adopted on a permanent basis.

Photo enforcement vehicles are typically located in residential areas where the speed limit is 35 mph or less, school zones, streets that border municipal parks, and work zones. Photo enforcement vehicles will park in the open, and signage will be placed ahead to warn motorists of the enforcement zone, in accordance with state law. Fines from citations will pay for the program and neighborhood traffic-calming projects. For more details, visit AuroraGov.org/PhotoEnforcement.
Save the date for the most “pawsome” event of the year

Hold onto your tails, animal lovers. Get ready for a tail-wagging good time at the Wine and Wags fundraiser supporting the Aurora Animal Shelter’s capacity needs.

The event, which will include a silent auction, wine tasting, appetizers and live entertainment, is happening from 3 to 6 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 1, at The Hangar at Stanley Marketplace, 2501 Dallas St., #135. The city is hosting the fundraiser, in partnership with Spirit of Aurora, a resident-founded, longtime nonprofit that funds various city and local community programs.

Like many shelters across the Front Range, the Aurora Animal Shelter is at capacity and trying to manage a constant influx of dogs. To help with space constraints, the city is working on much-needed shelter renovations at the shelter and acquiring a second facility to use as a satellite adoption center. The funds raised at this event will support these efforts. As a long-term goal, the city is planning a new shelter facility and is also exploring funding options for this project.

Ticket information will be posted under the news and calendar section at AuroraGov.org starting Sept. 1. For questions about the event, email rwhipple@auroragov.org or call 303.739.7258.

Consider donating at AuroraGov.org/SpiritofAurora if you can’t attend. Visit AuroraAnimalShelter.org to learn more about city animal services, including pet adoptions.

Aurora City Council awards youth activities

Over the summer, the Aurora City Council directed $3.8 million in funds—received from the sale of the Denver Broncos—toward youth activities as part of the Dream Big for Aurora Youth campaign.

Earlier in the year, the city conducted extensive community outreach to youth, parents and youth-serving organizations to gather input on how the city should spend the one-time award, which must support activities for youth.

The City Council considered community feedback received and selected several projects to award, including:

- Sports scholarships by Chance Sports
- Financial assistance and mental health resources for youth by Soccer City
- Construction of half basketball court at Carson Park
- Construction of a complete basketball court at Utah Park
- After-school programming for COMPASS in partnership with Aurora Public Schools
- Capital improvements to Central Library, specifically for the children’s area, including installation of a STEM maker lab
- Training of service dogs to assist children with disabilities
- Free city recreation passes for youth

Visit EngageAurora.org/Youth for a complete list of projects and costs. For questions, email engagecec@auroragov.org or call 303.739.7258.

Fall Into Fun at the AMC

Get ready for pumpkin spice and everything nice. Aurora’s Fall Into Fun Festival is returning Saturday, Oct. 14, on the Great Lawn of the Aurora Municipal Center, 15151 E. Alameda Parkway.

Come by any time from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for this fall celebration sponsored by E-470. Enjoy energetic live performances, a petting zoo, delicious food trucks, an inflatable corn maze, a pumpkin patch and unique vendors. Learn more at AuroraGov.org/FallIntoFun.

This year’s election in Aurora is a big one, with voters filling seats Nov. 7 for Aurora Mayor, City Council Wards IV, V and VI and two At-Large positions.

A proposed citizen-initiated charter amendment regarding changing Aurora’s form of government and council term limits may appear on the ballot, along with other special district, state offices, ballot issues and ballot questions.

It’s time to make sure you are registered to vote and ready for the coordinated election.

Ballots are mailed in every Colorado election, and voters are encouraged to vote their mail ballot and drop it off in a secure, unmanned 24-hour drop box to avoid lines.

Visit GoVoteColorado.gov to check your registration status and make sure your address is current because ballots are not forwarded by the U.S. Postal Service.

Ballots will be mailed starting Oct. 16 to all active registered voters. If you do not receive a ballot by Oct. 23, update your voter registration at GoVoteColorado.gov by Oct. 30, and a replacement one will be mailed to you. Or you may visit a Voter Service and Polling Center for a replacement ballot starting Oct. 30. After Oct. 30, ballots cannot be mailed to voters, and you will need to visit a Voter Service and Polling Center to update your registration and request a ballot.

Ballots may be returned by mail with paid postage, or delivered to any one of the ballot drop-off locations in your county. Ballots must be received by 7 p.m. Election Day Nov. 7 to be counted.

Visit any Service and Polling Center between Oct. 30 and Nov. 7, including those at the Arapahoe County CentrePoint Plaza, 14980 E. Alameda Drive, the Martin Luther King Jr. Library, 9898 E. Colfax Ave., and Moorhead Recreation Center, 2390 Havana St., to register to vote, update your registration, replace or request a ballot, or vote on an accessible voting machine.

Candidate forums hosted by local media and community organizations will be air live on AuroraTV (Comcast 8/880) at 6 p.m. Sept. 28, and available for on-demand viewing at AuroraTV.org.

For information on Aurora election issues, visit AuroraGov.org/Elections. For county voter resources, visit ArapahoeVotes.gov, AdamsVotes.com or DouglasVotes.com depending on the county in which you live.

Your vote is your voice

Fall Into Fun at the AMC

Get ready for pumpkin spice and everything nice. Aurora’s Fall Into Fun Festival is returning Saturday, Oct. 14, on the Great Lawn of the Aurora Municipal Center, 15151 E. Alameda Parkway.

Come by any time from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. for this fall celebration sponsored by E-470. Enjoy energetic live performances, a petting zoo, delicious food trucks, an inflatable corn maze, a pumpkin patch and unique vendors. Learn more at AuroraGov.org/FallIntoFun.
Behind the tap:
Where your water comes from

At Aurora Water, public outreach is an important cornerstone of keeping our community informed about this limited and precious resource. That’s why Aurora Water is actively involved throughout the city. Besides its nationally recognized water conservation programs, the department’s award-winning environmental education and outreach team works with more than 19,000 K-12 students each year throughout Aurora.

We often ask, “where does your water come from?” and the most common answer is, “from the tap.” Seems logical, but there’s also a vast network of infrastructure required before one of our almost 400,000 residents can take a hot shower or fill a glass with some great-tasting water.

Aurora’s water begins as snowmelt in the mountains. The city’s extensive system of reservoirs, rivers, tunnels, pipes and water purification facilities moves water as far as 150 miles from high in the mountains to customer homes. Each spring, the snowmelt can evaporate into the air, seep into the ground or flow as surface water runoff into river basins. Aurora’s water supply is primarily from surface water sources from the Arkansas (25%), Colorado (25%) and South Platte (50%) river basins.

Once runoff begins, the water is captured and stored in 12 reservoirs and lakes: Aurora, Henry/Meredith, Homestake, Ivanhoe, Jefferson, Pueblo, Quincy, Spinney Mountain, Strontia Springs, Twin and Turquoise. Aurora has more than 156,000 acre feet of water storage, which—when filled to capacity—is enough to supply the city with water for up to 30 months.

In addition, Aurora Water’s pioneering Prairie Waters system is an innovative potable reuse system that recaptures river water the city already owns. The water is treated using some of the most advanced purification technology in the country. This system provides the city with up to 10 million gallons of water per day, making Aurora the highest reuse utility in the state.

As the third largest city in Colorado, Aurora is not located near a major water source, so it relies on this complex and cohesive system of storage and reuse to ensure our community has the water it needs today and tomorrow. Learn more about Aurora’s water system at AuroraWater.org.

Tour the Binney Water Purification Facility

Learn more about the Prairie Waters system by touring Binney at 11 a.m. Friday, Sept. 29. Completed in 2010, Binney is one of the most innovative water treatment facilities in the nation. Treating up to 10 million gallons of water per day, this state-of-the-art facility is a crucial part of the Prairie Waters system and water reuse, increasing Aurora’s water security, sustainability and resilience. Space is limited and registration is required.

To apply, visit AuroraWater.org.

Sprinkler system maintenance

It may be hard to hear but regular freezing temperatures are right around the corner and now is a good time to prepare your home to ensure everything is running properly. For seasonal checklists, visit AuroraGov.org/HomeownerResources.

• Turn off and blow out automatic and manual sprinkler systems.
• Disconnect hoses from outdoor spigots.
• Remove leaves from the roof gutters and be sure to point the downspouts away from your home.
• Know the location of your water shut-off valve and test it regularly.
• Wrap pipes located in unheated areas or near exterior walls of your home or business to protect them.
• Flush your water heater twice a year—spring and fall are good times to do this. Check with your tank’s manufacturer for instructions on flushing the water heater or call a plumber to do this.
• There’s still time to install a smart controller for next season. And it makes it easier to blow out your system since your phone becomes a controller remote. Aurora Water offers rebates for smart controllers at AuroraGov.org/WaterRebates.

Credit card fees begin in October

Beginning in October, all credit card transactions for water bill payments will have a transaction fee of $1.95 for residential customers and $7.95 for commercial, multifamily and irrigation accounts. Credit card processing fees cost Aurora Water 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.