Improving infrastructure in northwest Aurora

Northwest Aurora is the city’s oldest part of town, and several efforts are underway to make improvements to existing infrastructure.

Every year, the city of Aurora allocates a portion of its budget to pave unpaved public alleyways in northwest Aurora with concrete. Five alleys are selected annually to be paved. Information on the program is available at AuroraGov.org/Alleys.

In addition, the city of Aurora and Xcel Energy are collaborating on the Northwest Aurora Alley Lighting Project, which will help this area switch to cheaper, cleaner, energy-saving LED outdoor lighting in public alleyways. The project will replace and upgrade roughly 800 alley lights throughout northwest Aurora with energy- and money-saving sustainable lighting.

The new fixtures are brighter and more energy efficient, which will make alleys safer while saving the city money. Older residential streetlight technology causes glare and more undirected light, but new residential LED street lighting technology reduces glare and focuses the light directly on the area to be lit.

The installations will take place from the fall of this year through 2024 in phases throughout the project area from Havana Street to Yosemite Street and from 11th Avenue to 25th Avenue. Additional information is available at AuroraGov.org/Alleys, or by calling Access Aurora at nwalleylighting@auroragov.org or by calling Access Aurora at 303.739.7000 during regular business hours.

Finally, two projects are underway related to safety and mobility. The Havana/11th/Del Mar Improvements Project, which will be constructed starting by winter 2023 or spring 2024, will bring improvements to pedestrian and bus stop facilities, traffic signals and lane striping to the intersections within the “triangle” of Havana Street, 11th Avenue and Del Mar Parkway. Visit EngageAurora.org/DelMarTriangle to find out more.

The NW Aurora Intersections Pedestrian Enhancement Program will construct bulb-outs, or curb extensions, at up to eight intersections to enhance walking and driving conditions in northwest Aurora neighborhoods. Project construction is estimated to start in 2024. For details, visit EngageAurora.org/NWPedSafety.

Upcoming Aurora City Council Town Meetings

Ward I Town Meeting
Council Member Crystal Murillo
- Aug. 24, 6-7:30 p.m.
  Martin Luther King, Jr. Library
- Sept. 28, 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
- Aug. 2, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Aurora Center for Active Adults
- Sept. 6, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Aurora Municipal Center, Aurora Room

Ward IV Town Meeting
Council Member Juan Marcano
- Aug. 10, 6:30-8 p.m.
- Sept. 14, 6:30-8 p.m.
  Colorado Early Colleges (hybrid)

Ward V Town Meeting
Council Member Alison Coombs
- Aug. 19, 10:30 a.m.-noon
  Mission Viejo Library
- Aug. 22, 6-7:30 p.m.
  Heather Gardens Clubhouse
- Sept. 12, 6-7:30 p.m.
  Central Recreation Center (hybrid)

Ward VI Town Meeting
Council Member Françoise Bergan
- Sept. 20, 6-8 p.m.
  Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Club
- 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
Safeguard the well-being of your furry friends

Do you have your pet microchipped? The Aurora Animal Shelter is observing National Check the Chip Day, which is recognized on Aug. 15, all month long. This day serves as a reminder for pet owners to check the status and accuracy of their pets’ microchips, as they play a vital role in reuniting lost or stolen pets with their owners.

Pet owners can help prevent heartache and facilitate swift reunions in case of an unfortunate separation by taking a few moments to verify the information stored in their microchips. Take into consideration these tips:

- **Get your pet microchipped:** The Aurora Animal Shelter can microchip your pet for $10 on a walk-in basis. Shelter staff can also scan and check the microchip for proper functioning.

- **Update your contact information:** If you have changed your address, phone number, or any other contact details since your pet was microchipped, make sure to update the information in the pet recovery database, such as AAHA.org. Accurate and up-to-date information is vital for a successful reunion.

- **Collar and tag inspection:** While microchips provide a reliable form of identification, it’s still essential for pets to wear collars with identification tags. Ensure that your pet’s collar is in good condition, and the tag contains your current contact information.

If you don’t have a pet and are thinking about adopting, check out the Aurora Animal Shelter and its adoption specials:

- **August Special:** Adopt two kittens for only $200. Regular adoption fee for cats is $131. This adoption special applies to any kitten under six months of age and only applies to kittens available at time of adoption.

- **September Special:** Same kittens special as above and adoption fees on all adult dogs, six months and older, will be reduced to 50% off the entire month. Regular adoption fees on dogs 6 months to 6 years is $158 and dogs over 6 years is $71.

For more information on the adoption process, visit AuroraAnimalShelter.org, call 303.326.8280 or email animalservices@auroragov.org.

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Back to our roots: turf conversion

We’re going back to our roots. To conserve water, the city of Aurora is converting areas of select parks and city properties from Kentucky bluegrass turf to water-wise alternatives, such as native grasses in low-usage areas or drought-tolerant Bermuda turf in high-usage areas.

In 2023, 14 sites are undergoing conversion. These conversions will reduce water usage in these areas by 70 percent, conserving millions of gallons of water while still providing ample space in our parks for public use and enjoyment.

The conversion process is currently underway at sites across the city and will continue throughout the summer. Initial growth will take place over the following months. As work is being done, guests may see areas with brown grass or patches of dirt. This is part of the conversion process and is normal.

In areas where conversion is happening, please remain off the grass and dirt and enjoy another area of the park.

For a complete list of locations and for more information, visit AuroraGov.org/Roots.

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Agriculture Festival returns to the Plains Conservation Center

Explore Colorado’s high plains at the annual Agriculture Festival from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 16, at the Plains Conservation Center, 21901 E. Hampden Ave. Learn about where food comes from and how you can support healthy environments with regenerative agriculture and sustainable eating.

Enjoy wagon rides, 1880s homestead and tipi camp tours, farm animal interactions, food trucks, vendors and more in partnership with Denver Botanic Gardens.

Admission is $5 per vehicle. Registration is required at AuroraGov.org/PlainsCenter.
City continues to offer home repair programs for income-qualified homeowners

The city of Aurora continues to accept applications from income-qualified homeowners needing assistance in making necessary health and safety repairs to their homes as part of the city's housing rehabilitation programs.

The Essential Home Repair Program provides grants and/or loans to address urgent home system problems that are an immediate threat to the health and safety of the occupants, such as malfunctioning furnaces or water heaters and broken sewer and water main lines. The Minor Home Repair Program addresses repairs related to accessibility, electrical, plumbing, roofing, and HVAC. The Home Repair Loan Program provides loans to income eligible homeowners who need to make necessary repairs to their homes. This program offers funds to correct city code violations, improve energy efficiency, health and safety issues. Cosmetic changes and non-essential upgrades to the property are not eligible.

In addition to the housing rehabilitation programs, the city offers various housing-related counseling services and educational seminars for first-time homebuyers. The city also offers the Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program for eligible homeowners who have experienced financial hardship associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn more about these programs and apply at AuroraGov.org/Housing. Questions? Email comdev@auroragov.org or call 303.739.7900.

Rebates coming soon to help fund chase drain installation

The city of Aurora is offering a rebate program to assist with the installation of chase drains. The program is intended to assist homeowners with mitigating drainage ponding along sidewalks.

The program will provide a rebate of up to $3,000 for the cost of qualifying materials. Chase drains must be installed by a licensed and bonded contractor with a city permit.

While a sidewalk chase drain does not reduce the amount of water overflow from irrigation systems, rain or snowmelt, a chase drain will help redirect drainage under the sidewalk to the street instead of pooling on the sidewalk surface.

To find out more about the rebate and the deadline to apply, visit AuroraGov.org/ChaseDrainRebate.

RTD to offer fare-free program for youth

Earlier this year, the Regional Transportation District proposed a one-year pilot program to provide zero fare for riders ages 19 and under. If the pilot program receives final approval from RTD’s board of directors, Zero Fare for Youth will start Sept. 1, 2023.

The 12-month program will allow all youth ages 19 and under to use RTD services at no cost. The push to serve youth populations is part of a months-long effort by the transit agency to review RTD’s overall fare structure and its impact.

Zero Fare for Youth promotes equity by ensuring transportation is not a barrier to accessing education, community resources or employment. Goals of the 12-month pilot program also include encouraging lifelong transit use through early exposure to RTD’s system and attracting a new generation of customers. RTD is now in the process of establishing lines of communication with public and private schools, youth organizations, activity centers, and community groups to promote Zero Fare for Youth.

Following the proposed pilot program’s completion in August 2024, RTD will evaluate its effectiveness, determine the impact on traditionally disadvantaged or minority communities, and assess possible funding opportunities for the program’s continuation in the future. For more information about the Zero Fare for Youth, visit RTD-Denver.com.

2023 Election Early Reminders

• The 2023 Coordinated Election is Tuesday, Nov. 7.
• Offices for Mayor and Ward IV, Ward V, Ward VI and two At-Large council members will be elected.
• Please register or update your voter registration at GoVoteColorado.gov to ensure you receive your mail ballot.
• Look for more election information in News Aurora’s September issue.
If you aren’t sure what to do with your lawn care products, pesticides, motor oil or other household chemicals, Waste Management provides low-cost recycling opportunities year-round for Aurora Water customers. These options keep hazardous materials out of residential trash and landfills where they may leach into our water systems. For just $10, they will safely collect potentially hazardous or hard-to-recycle items through the At-Your-Door curbside pickup program. They also offer an emergency drop-off program for Aurora residents relocating or selling their homes. Residents can call the Waste Management hotline at 800.449.7587 and provide the operator with the reason for the drop-off request.

To schedule a pickup and for additional information, including materials accepted through the program, visit WMatYourDoor.com/residential.

Credit card fees begin in October—Make the switch to save money

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 be free.

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

Don’t trash your chemicals

If you aren’t sure what to do with your lawn care products, pesticides, motor oil or other household chemicals, Waste Management provides low-cost recycling opportunities year-round for Aurora Water customers. These options keep hazardous materials out of residential trash and landfills where they may leach into our water systems. For just $10, they will safely collect potentially hazardous or hard-to-recycle items through the At-Your-Door curbside pickup program. They also offer an emergency drop-off program for Aurora residents relocating or selling their homes. Residents can call the Waste Management hotline at 800.449.7587 and provide the operator with the reason for the drop-off request.

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