Help shape our entire transportation system

What is your vision for the future of transportation in Aurora? What transportation improvements and options would you like to see?

Many studies conducted over the years in Aurora have targeted specific areas of the city to gather public input and provide guidance for transportation needs, resulting in new or improved ways to get around. But this year, the city is launching Connecting Aurora--its first-ever citywide multimodal transportation master plan--to look holistically at the transportation needs of the entire city.

Over the next couple of years, the city will examine how to make traveling in Aurora better for everyone in our community, including people of all incomes and abilities. The plan will propose improvements to be implemented over the next five to 20 years and beyond to offer safer, more comfortable, and more convenient transportation options for everyone who walks, rolls, bikes, drives and takes transit.

Your feedback is critical in guiding the development of Connecting Aurora. Help us shape Aurora's transportation future and guide investment to enhance your quality of life.

Visit EngageAurora.org/ConnectingAurora to find out more about upcoming engagement opportunities. To ask questions, email connectingauroraco@gmail.com or call 720.984.2109.

The city will start gathering input this spring and continue throughout the year, and we look forward to partnering with our community on this important effort.

RTD lowers fares for all services

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) implemented a new systemwide fare structure on Jan. 1. This is the first time the agency has lowered fares for all RTD services. The change is a result of a yearlong fare study and equity analysis aimed at creating a fare structure that is more equitable, affordable, and simple. To find out details on the new fares, visit RTD-Denver.com.
Aurora Water’s Lead Replacement Program

There is nothing more important to Aurora Water than public health and providing our community with safe and dependable water. As part of this mission, Aurora Water wants to help keep your household safe from lead through our Lead Replacement Program. When water service lines containing lead are found, they will be replaced for free. Service line replacements normally cost $10,000.

Lead, a naturally occurring metal, has been found to be harmful to human health. Infants, young children and pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of lead because it accumulates in the body. There is no identified safe level of lead so, whenever possible, households should seek to reduce and eliminate exposure.

While Aurora’s water is lead-free when it leaves the treatment facility and travels through water mains, some older homes in our community have water service lines (the pipe that moves water from the water main to a building), household plumbing materials and faucets made with lead. Aurora Water consistently meets all state and federal regulations for lead.

Before 1960, lead and galvanized steel were sometimes used for water service lines. Lead in plumbing can slowly dissolve into the water or break off into tiny particles. Galvanized steel may have captured lead and can release tiny particles if lead pipes or fittings were ever connected downstream.

To protect our customers, Aurora Water monitors and adjusts the water’s chemistry to prevent corrosion that may result in lead at the tap. We also sample water for lead at high-risk homes in the community. If no part of your service line or plumbing contains lead, your household is likely not at risk.

Since water service lines are buried, homeowners may not know what they are made of, and many records do not indicate the service line material. New federal and state regulations now require all water systems to inspect water service lines to identify the type of material they are made of. After identifying service line material, water systems must develop a plan for removing and replacing lead and galvanized steel service lines.

Homes and buildings built before 1960 are more likely to have water service lines and plumbing containing lead. Aurora Water has been investigating water service lines in Original Aurora, where many homes were built before 1960. Most of these water service lines were installed before Aurora even had a water department.

The portion of the service line from the water meter into a home is not owned or maintained by Aurora Water. Therefore, property owners must provide consent for Aurora Water’s contractor to access the property so that two, 6-inch holes can be dug, using a technique called potholing, and the service line can be inspected. Property owners with homes built prior to 1960 will receive a letter and consent form. If your home was built prior to 1960, you may complete the consent form online at AuroraGov.org/Lead.

If lead or galvanized steel service lines are found during an inspection, property occupants will be provided with a water pitcher filter that removes lead. Aurora Water is currently developing the plan and schedule for water service line replacements, which will be shared with the community in coming months.

Details about Aurora Water’s Lead Replacement Program are available at AuroraGov.org/Lead. For more information, call 720.859.4411 or email LeadReplacement@auroragov.org.

Recycle electronics in March

The city, in partnership with Techno Rescue, is offering Aurora residents special event pricing for e-cycling from March 11 to 22 (closed Sundays) at Techno Rescue, 3251 Lewiston St., Suite 10. The facility is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. For pricing information, a list of items not accepted and more, visit AuroraGov.org/Recycle and go to Electronics Recycling.

Emergency outdoor warning siren test March 12

The city of Aurora Office of Emergency Management will conduct an audible test of the city’s emergency outdoor warning sirens at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 12. The test will include more than 50 sirens throughout Aurora. If you are outdoors, you should hear a three-minute wailing sound. There will be no voice heard during the test, and the sirens may not be audible indoors.

The city conducts audible tests of the sirens twice a year (in March and November), and silent testing weekly year-round. The purpose of these all-hazards sirens is to provide notice regarding an emergency situation, such as a tornado warning or hazardous-material spill.

There is no “all-clear” tone that sounds when the situation has been resolved or mitigated. Instead, any tone coming from the sirens should be viewed as a call to immediately take shelter and seek additional information via weather radio, local TV and radio, or the city’s Facebook (Facebook.com/AuroraGov) and Twitter (@AuroraGov) accounts.

In the event of an emergency, both residents and businesses should use the information available to decide as to when the threat has passed. It should be noted that sirens will be re-activated in the event a new warning or a new threat arises.

For more information about the outdoor warning sirens and to hear an example of the siren wail, go to AuroraGov.org/OEM.
Museum exhibit dives into Aurora’s library history

Explore the rich history of Aurora and the profound impact of libraries in shaping communities in the Aurora History Museum’s latest exhibit, “Pages of the Past: Aurora’s Library System.”

The city’s library system has a storied past that mirrors the city’s growth and changing demographics, starting from a one-room library in Sarah Wood’s home to a seven-library system. The exhibit, open now through March 3, showcases historic photography from the museum and library archives and profiles prominent libraries throughout the years.

The Aurora History Museum, located at 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. For more information, visit AuroraMuseum.org.

Stay informed with Aurora’s weekly purchasing report

If you’d like to stay better informed on how the city spends its money and who receives city contracts, Aurora makes it easy with a weekly report of purchasing activity.

The Aurora City Council recently approved updates to the city’s purchasing code intended to streamline the purchasing process for more timely and efficient delivery of goods, services and construction. As part of the changes, more contracts and change orders are placed on the weekly procurement activity report. This report, which is typically available on Mondays, is sent to City Council members and available for public review at AuroraGov.org/Purchasing.

Council members have the right to call up most items from the report for consideration at a council meeting, and items that aren’t called up are authorized to move forward without delay. This reduces both the amount of time needed to implement contracts and the uncertainty faced by businesses waiting for contract approval.

Among the other purchasing code changes approved by the City Council, the threshold for conducting formal written bids or negotiated requests for proposals processes has been raised to $50,000. Informal processes for lower contract amounts have been put in place by the city’s Office of Purchasing Services.

“We’re constantly looking for ways to improve our delivery of city services, and the changes approved by the City Council help ensure we are efficient and transparent with purchases,” said Bryn Fillinger, manager of Purchasing Services. “We want our residents to know their money is being spent wisely, and our contractors to know that Aurora is a straight-forward and open place to do business.”

Learn more about the city’s Office of Purchasing Services, the bidding process, and the weekly report at AuroraGov.org/Purchasing.

Deeper global connections open doors to economic growth and cultural exchanges

In 2023, Aurora both formalized its sixth sister city relationship and received a visit from one of the highest-profile foreign dignitaries in its history, underscoring the city’s increasing reputation as a high-profile player in global affairs.

Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman and Chihuahua, Mexico, Mayor Marco Bonilla signed a sister cities agreement in December between the two cities with the purpose of exchanging good practices, sharing public policies, and strengthening ties to promote the development of both cities.

In remarks during the signing ceremony, Coffman acknowledged that establishing this relationship is, above all, a recognition of the Mexican community living in Aurora. Bonilla noted that the relationship is an opportunity to promote economic and cultural cooperation between the two cities.

Aurora Sister Cities International is an independent nonprofit organization that promotes local and global partnerships centered on cultural, educational, and best practices exchange, cultivating a network of community ambassadors who champion peace and prosperity around the world. Aurora’s other sister cities are Adama, Ethiopia; Ilopango, El Salvador; Jaco, Costa Rica; Seongnam City, Korea; and Zielona Gora, Poland. Current Aurora friendship cities are Antiguo Cuscatlán, El Salvador; and New Taipei City, Taiwan. To learn more, visit AuroraSisterCities.org.

Aurora is not only a sister city to a city in El Salvador, but is home to the country’s consulate, which serves Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska and Kansas. In addition, Salvadorans make up the third-largest foreign-born population in Aurora.

In December, the city welcomed El Salvador Vice President Félix Ulloa, who traveled to Aurora to participate in events designed to strengthen diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties between Aurora and El Salvador. He met with local business leaders to discuss innovative ideas, engaged in meaningful conversations with Salvadorans in Aurora, and attended a mayor-hosted reception to further explore avenues of collaboration.

“The vice president’s trip announces to the world that the city of Aurora, the most culturally diverse city in Colorado, is welcomed and embraced on the world stage,” Coffman said. “His visit enhances our international status and opens doors to economic growth, cultural exchanges, and deeper global connections.”

Aurora is indeed “The World in a City” and proudly celebrates its international population. One out of five residents are foreign-born, and more than 160 languages are spoken in Aurora schools. The city follows a detailed Immigrant Integration Plan to help immigrants and refugees integrate into the city’s civic, economic, and cultural life.
Planning for now and the future: **Innovative water solutions**

Aurora Water is the state leader in innovative water solutions. We must be. Aurora is the third largest city in Colorado, yet it’s not located by a major water source.

To plan for the current and future water needs for the city, Aurora Water takes a proactive, integrated master planning approach. The Integrated Water Master Plan (IWMP) is a comprehensive study of the city’s water source, storage, treatment and delivery systems used to guide Aurora Water’s future water decisions. The IWMP provides a roadmap for meeting the city’s future needs and prioritizes capital improvement projects (CIP).

Aurora Water’s first IWMP was completed in 2017. Currently underway is a new IWMP, which includes results from recent studies, new technologies and updated climate information that has been evaluated and incorporated to produce an adaptable 20-year CIP and buildout roadmap. The CIP includes identified projects, estimated costs and associated timing to help inform Aurora Water’s decisions.

Although we do not know what the future holds, through scenario planning and modeling, Aurora Water can make informed decisions to implement capital projects that work for a range of futures. These scenarios work as signposts to help ensure we are on the right track if there are any significant changes, such as climate changes.

Aurora Water’s innovative water solutions can also be seen in our strong history of water reuse and water conservation, which are important aspects of how we plan for now and into the future. Next month, News Aurora will include information on our past water reuse projects and ongoing plans. For more information regarding the IWMP, visit [AuroraGov.org/WaterReports](http://AuroraGov.org/WaterReports).

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**Sign up for budget billing by April 15**

Budget Billing allows your water payments to be spread evenly through the year. Aurora Water calculates your utility costs, previous usage and seasonal fluctuations in water consumption to provide a more predictable bill each month. Budget Billing does not reduce your overall water utility expenses, so you will still receive a monthly bill showing your actual consumption, charges and account balance. Aurora Water will reconcile Budget Billing accounts every April and reset your Budget Billing payment based on historical data from your account. Visit [AuroraWater.org](http://AuroraWater.org) for more info and to enroll.

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**Do you Know Your Flow?**

Resolve to become more water efficient with Aurora Water’s Know Your Flow program. This free program can help you save water through its customized monthly emails, which summarize your real water use and allow you to make household changes to conserve more water and save money on your water bills. You will also receive weekly emails April through October with recommended watering times for your sprinkler system.

For more information, visit [AuroraGov.org/KnowYourFlow](http://AuroraGov.org/KnowYourFlow).