

**Federal, State and Intergovernmental Relations (FSIR) Meeting**

**October 28, 2020**

**1:00 PM**

**WebEx Event**

**Access information provide to Internal Staff**

**Public Participation Dialing Instructions**

**Dial Access Number: 1-408-418-9388**

**Enter Participant Code: 146 304 1483**

**Council Member Angela Lawson, Chair**

**Council Member Allison Hiltz, Vice Chair**

**Council Member Crystal Murillo, Member**

Serve as leaders and partner with other governments and jurisdictions

1. Consent Items (None)
2. Approval of Minutes Lawson
3. DEI Update & Resolution Action Item Napper
4. Federal Legislative Update Hettinger
5. State Legislative Update O'Keefe/Palmisano
6. State & Federal Priorities Palmisano
7. Water Kitzmann
8. Miscellaneous Matters for Consideration

**Next meeting – November 20, 2020**

**Federal, State and Intergovernmental Relations (FSIR) Meeting**  
**Video Conference Call Meeting**  
September 25, 2020

Members Present: Council Member Angela Lawson, Chair; Council Member Allison Hiltz, Vice-Chair; Council Member Crystal Murillo, Member

Others Present: Luke Palmisano, Nancy Rodgers, Kathy Kitzmann, Peggi O'Keefe, Lauri Hettinger, Council Member Curtis Gardner, Natasha Campbell, Roberto Venegas, Dan Brotzman

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** August 28, 2020 minutes were approved as written.
- 

2. **CONSENT ITEMS:** None.
- 

3. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

Summary of Issue and Discussion: Chair CM Angela Lawson welcomed the committee to the video conference call and introductions were made.

Outcome: Information only.

Follow-up Action: None.

---

4. **FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Lauri Hettinger, federal lobbyist, gave an update on current federal legislation. The House has passed a continuing resolution to fund the government at current funding levels through December 11, 2020. It will go to the Senate on Wednesday. Also attached to this resolution was the Transportation bill, which was extended for another year, through October 1, 2021. What happens with appropriations will depend on what happens in the election. If the Republicans still control the Senate, they will most likely pass an omnibus appropriations bill to fund all the federal agencies. If the Senate flips to Democrat control, they will most likely pass a continuation until March of 2021.
- The House is about to introduce another COVID relief bill of \$2.4 trillion. More details to come next week. There may be some support from the administration but the House and the Senate are still far apart on how much to include in the bill. It looks like there will not be another COVID relief bill before the election. If the Republicans stay in office there may be a smaller bill passed since the Democrats will have no leverage. If the Democrats take control, they will wait until they take office to pass something. CM Lawson asked if there is any possibility to get funding for our local transit system even under a new administration? She said she would like to get the message to our federal delegation that our local transit system is facing some impacting budget shortfalls. L. Hettinger said she thinks there will be funding for transit in a larger package and she thinks there is bipartisan support for that.
- L. Hettinger gave an update on the 2020 Census. Originally, the census count was supposed to stop on September 30, 2020 and the delivery date to the President was on Dec 31, 2020. Earlier this

year, in April, the Census moved the reporting to October 31, 2020 due to COVID. In late July, the Census said they were going back to the original date of September 30, 2020. Now, a court order has moved the census count reporting date back to October 31, 2020 with a delivery date to the President of April 2021.

Summary of Issue and Discussion: Information only.

Outcome: Information only.

Follow-up Action: None at this time.

---

## 5. STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

### Summary of Issue and Discussion:

Peggi O'Keefe, state lobbyist, gave an update on the state legislation. The state budget cut all the interim committees for this year, so most legislators have been working on campaigns. There are few bills that look to be coming up next year. One, which Rep Garnett, who is the incoming speaker, will introduce is on police involved deaths. One policy point being the creation of a third-party investigator. There may also be a transparency measure so the public can follow the investigation better. As soon as there is more information P. O'Keefe will send that out to the committee. CML's policy committee has not yet met but there are some bills that they will most likely take up again. The land use bill is one, open meetings cleanup bill is another. There will be more legislation to discuss closer to January.

CM Lawson asked if a meeting will be set up with Council and the state delegation before the election and after the election? L. Palmisano said that he would like to set up a meeting before the election. He will be sending out the proposed date of October 7 to all of council. The topic for this call will be police reform. He will also try to set up a call for after the election as there may be new members of the state delegation. That call will focus on policy and the city's priorities going forward. CM Lawson said she likes the meeting on police reform and would like to have a call after the elections as well. It is important to have the discussion with the state delegation on what the city's priorities are leading into the new legislative session.

Outcome: Calls with council and state delegation will be set up for October 7, 2020 and for after the November elections.

Follow-up Action: L. Palmisano will work on setting up meetings with council and state delegation.

---

## 6. 2020 BALLOT QUESTIONS

Summary of Issue and Discussion: L. Palmisano said that the 11 ballot initiatives were in the back up information for this meeting. Staff is recommending that all ballot questions be forwarded

to City Council Study Session on October 5, 2020. CM Lawson, CM Murillo and CM Hiltz agreed unanimously to move all 11 ballot questions to Study Session for discussion with full council.

Outcome: CM Lawson, CM Murillo and CM Hiltz agreed unanimously to move all 11 ballot questions to Study Session for discussion with full council at the October 5, 2020 Study Session.

Follow-up Action: Staff will get the ballot questions on the agenda for the October 5, 2020 Study Session.

## 7. REVIEW & RENEWAL OF 2021 STATE & FEDERAL LOBBYING CONTRACTS

Summary of Issue and Discussion: L. Palmisano said both the state and federal lobbying contracts are at the end of their first year and are up for an extension. Both lobbying teams have been excellent over the last year. After discussions with both teams and because of current budget restrictions, we are reducing the contracts a little bit. The state lobbying contract for 2020 was \$65,000 and will be reduced by \$2500 in 2021. The federal lobbying contract for 2020 was \$125,000 and will be reduced by \$5000 in 2021. Staff is recommending taking these amended contracts to full council for approval on November 16, 2020. CM Lawson, CM Murillo and CM Hiltz agreed unanimously to forward contracts to full council for approval.

Outcome: CM Lawson, CM Murillo and CM Hiltz agreed unanimously to move state and federal lobbying contracts to full council at the November 16, 2020 Study Session for discussion and approval.

Follow-up Action: Staff will get the state and federal lobbying contracts on the agenda for the November 16, 2020 Study Session.

## 8. WATER:

Summary of Issue and Discussion: K. Kitmann said Aurora Water Department is setting up individual appointments with the Aurora state representatives to discuss general water policy issues that might come up in the next legislative session. Also, the Aurora Water department's state lobbying services contract is ending, and a new selection should be made by end of next week and a new contract will be on track to be signed on November 5, 2020.

Outcome: Information only.

Follow-up Action: None at this time.

## 9. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

CM Lawson said she would like to get an idea from all of council, CML and staff on what they would like to see on the city's legislative priorities list. She said she would like to have those items come to FSIR for discussion in November. L. Palmisano said that he is sending out a form to all department heads to get a list of their priorities. And will have a draft list of priorities at next month's committee meeting. Once discussed at committee that list will then go to Study Session in November or December.

L. Palmisano said that Janice Napper, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, is interested in coming to a give an update on her new department in November. CM Lawson said she would like to hear from J. Napper in October.

Outcome: Information only.

Follow-up Action: Information only.

---

---

**10. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2020, 1:00 PM WebEx video conference meeting.

---

---

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Lawson  
Committee Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# **CITY OF AURORA MUNICIPAL INITIATIVES – DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) was created in January 2020 in order to lead the city of Aurora, in building, creating and maintaining a more equitable and inclusive city by systemically and strategically facilitating the integration of greater representation, fairness, belonging and care into our policies, procedures, and practices. This office reports directly to the City Manager, emphasizing an organizational focus on creating a more equitable Aurora by enhancing equity, inclusion and cultural competence in our workplace and the provision of services to our citizens. In June 2020, the Community Relations division was moved from the Neighborhood Services department to the Office of DEI in order to broaden the focus of community relations and community engagement organization wide.

The Office of DEI is strategically leading the organization through several interconnected initiatives. Steps include assessing where we are as an organization and as a community – what are the perceptions vs. the reality; a review of current challenges; inclusive leadership, unconscious bias, explicit and implicit bias and micro-aggression training for upper management, managers and supervisors; attracting, retaining and advancing top talent from diverse backgrounds; and developing a Racial Equity Plan for the city which will examine city services and procedures through a racial equity lens.

At the onset of the DEI initiative, the city contracted with GARE (Government Alliance on Race and Equity), which is a national network of government entities working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. There are over 100+ members in 30 states and 150+ cities. GARE provides tools to put theory into action and provides networking opportunities and resources that the city utilizes in developing our DEI strategy.

Through the GARE partnership and utilizing their framework, several initiatives are in place:

**ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STATE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN THE CITY OF AURORA** – as a benefit of membership, GARE is working with us to conduct an all employee survey. Where are we as an organization – what are the issues, challenges, problems, successes as perceived by employees. They will collect and analyze the survey data and provide us with survey insights.

**EQUITY CHAMPIONS** – This is the city's racial equity core team, established in June 2020. They are the leadership team committed to equitable systemic change by designing, coordinating, and organizing racial equity plans and activities across the city of Aurora. Their role is to champion and advocate for racial equity and model organizational values; represent departments at leadership meetings and communicate back to departments; provide leadership, facilitation and coaching to internal department teams and coordinate, track and

report department racial equity plans, successes and improvements. Each city department has appointed 1 -2 Equity Champions to serve on this team, we meet every two weeks as a team. We are currently in the “Building a foundation, increasing the knowledge” phase including equity training, dialoguing about current issues in the city related to diversity, equity and inclusion and communicating with their respective departments about DEI issues.

### **DEI CITY WIDE KICKOFF**

The July 28 Town Hall with Jim Twombly, City Manager focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. It was open and available to all city employees. The DEI Officer, Community Relations Manager, Human Resources Director, the City Manager and members of the Equity Champions Team presented and were available for an open and insightful discussion and dialogue about how systemic racism, racial equity and inclusivity impact all our lives. Employees learned more about our opportunities, as one Aurora team, to make meaningful change.

### **FALL LEADERSHIP FORUM**

The city will host its annual Fall Leadership Forum in October 2020. It is a ½ day session for managers and supervisors. The topic for this forum is “Embodying Equity: Introduction to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and will be facilitated by a consulting group – Creative Strategies for Change.

### **CONSULTANT RFP**

An RFP was issued in August 2020 by the city seeking assistance from an experienced consultant/consulting firm to partner in facilitating discussions associated to system racial equity. This work shall include meeting with management staff and equity champions from each department and meet with external community-based leaders and stakeholders. They should demonstrate leading large organizational change as it pertains to race, racial equity, diversity and inclusion with an emphasized focus on how racial equity can influence city decisions, organizational and individual behaviors. We are currently in negotiations with the top ranked firm, they are projected to start the engagement in November 2020.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

A resolution was passed on May 5, 2020 by the City Council of Aurora, Colorado Condemning Hate Crime Acts and Anti-Asian Sentiments Against Asian Americans, Immigrants, and Refugees as Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

A draft resolution Affirming Aurora’s Commitment to Valuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is being forwarded to the FSIR policy committee for their review and consideration.

## **AFFINITY GROUPS**

Affinity groups – a group of people linked by a common interest or purpose. The Equity Champions are exploring best practices for establishing Affinity Groups, or Employee Resource Groups. The template for formation of groups is being created by Equity Champions subcommittee, HR and Legal.

## **DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES**

### **HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITMENT EFFORTS**

- New job descriptions utilize an unbiased approach – no gender coded words, requirements limited to core competencies, avoid unnecessary City speak or jargon.
- Recruiting has cultivated a bank of job sites and organizations to post and partner with to encourage diversity in the applicant pool.
- Enhanced focus on pre-planning to develop a recruitment and interview plan to support diversity throughout the process.
- Recruiter support developing inclusive supplemental screening questions.
- Guidelines on creating gender and ethnically diverse interview panels.
- Mandatory HR involvement on all interviews for supervisor & management positions.
- Recruiter support developing inclusive interview questions.

### **PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

#### **MANDATORY BI-ANNUAL TRAINING – ONLINE ELEARNING COURSES**

The City of Aurora strives for and is committed to providing a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. Supporting this important effort, along with the Human Resources (HR) Department is the City's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Office. DEI's mission is to lead in creating a more equitable and inclusive workplace by strategically facilitating the integration of greater representation, fairness, belonging and care into City initiatives.

Discrimination and harassment prevention training is a critical practice in creating awareness and understanding. Further, training plays a key role in the City's mission as each of us have a responsibility to protect our workplace from unwanted, unfair and illegal behavior. The City seeks cooperation from all employees to proactively create a workplace where equality of opportunity prevails.

Together the HR Department and DEI Office are disseminating a mandatory online training course for which completion will be required bi-annually for all employees. The courses below will be assigned accordingly to each employee through the Aurora Learning Management System (LMS) with the designated course titles listed below.

- **Preventing Discrimination and Harassment** (Employee 30-minutes)  
To be assigned to non-supervisory employees.
- **Preventing Discrimination and Harassment** (Supervisor/Manager 60-minutes)



To be assigned to all supervisory employees.

Both courses require each employee to review the City's EEO policy and complete an acknowledgement, in addition to viewing and completing the assigned eLearning course. Employees and supervisors must successfully complete the course and acknowledgment between **July 29, 2020 through September 30, 2020.**

## **TELEWORKING POLICY**

We're building language into our new teleworking policy to ensure there is not room for arbitrary decisions on the part of supervisors over who can and cannot telework. We're including standards that require objective, transparent reasons for why an employee is denied the opportunity to telework (or inversely, is not permitted to come to the office when others can).

## **SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM**

Data gathering began in 2019 on contracts and sub-contracts awarded to small, minority and women-owned businesses to assess where we are as a city in these awards. The goal after analysis of this data is to determine where we go from here as a city. In 2019, the city Purchasing Department, in partnership with the SBDC (Small Business Development Corporation), hosted a Contractors Fair to reach out to the contracting community, vendors and subcontracting firms, on How to do Business with the City of Aurora, what contracting opportunities are available and upcoming, and onsite networking opportunities with departmental representatives who had current or upcoming projects.

**DEPARTMENTAL FACILITATED DISCUSSIONS** – The Equity Champions began leading discussions and training with departmental leadership on microaggressions, the importance of racial equity in the departments and what it means for the department and employees. As an example, Aurora Water Equity Champions are meeting with senior leadership in their department and have a series of meetings with managers in the department for facilitated discussions on racial equity. The Police Department began with discussions facilitated by a consultant with the Chief's senior leadership team on Inclusive Leadership.

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

1. Commitment to Care Program:
  - a. Neighbor to Neighbor at Dayton Street Opportunity Center: local families and people experiencing homelessness are provided with food and community resources.
  - b. Food for Thought: food distribution to Aurora Public Schools and Cherry Creek School District families where children are provided with food to feed their families over the weekend.

- c. Immigrant & Refugee Food Pantry: provides culturally relevant foods, baby items, and community resources to immigrants and refugees. Support for people experiencing homelessness also available.
  - d. Aurora Day of Giving: once-a-month mobile food distribution event. Food for families along with pet food and baby supplies.
  - e. One Place Project: food and resource distribution event for victims of crime.
  - f. Senior Mobile Food Pantry: mobile food distribution event for seniors (55+).
  - g. Home for the Holidays: families are provided with resources to purchase food, hygiene products, and other household items.
  - h. Mobile Care Unit: mobilizing care in Aurora by responding to emerging COVID-19 & community needs via mobile pop-up events.
  - i. Aurora On-The-Go: providing fuel and/or Lyft credits to community members to remove transportation barriers.
  - j. Family Care Dignity Packs: providing dignity packs to families experiencing homelessness. Dignity Packs could include essential items like food, hygiene products, undergarments, gloves, hats, scarves, first aid kits, blankets, etc.
2. Safe Zones: community specific project (Safe Zones) designed for prevention, intervention and interruption to reduce youth violence, using the public health approach creating protective factor of increasing community engagement and connection.

These opportunities would come in the form of a series of “pop-up” type of events that will provide social and emotional support in building relationships with our youth in the communities, food, team building activities, peace circles, and Restorative Justice, organized and executed by collaboration of community-based organizations focused on youth violence prevention.

- 3. Keep the Lights On: The concept of Keep the Lights On is that it’s cheaper to keep the lights on in what is typically the largest building in every neighborhood, the local public school, and invite youth into the safe building versus burying another child, after losing them to violence. The KTLO program would create a safe haven for youth to congregate in Aurora. Upon startup, KTLO would be available Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 8pm – 2am. The facility gymnasium would be available along with select secured areas and classrooms. The possibilities are endless as to what programming can be offered at this site, however, proven preventive programs will be implemented at launch.
- 4. DEI Training (Incline): Diversity/Cultural Competency Training
- 5. Human Relations Commission: To promote a mutual understanding and respect among all people. Disseminate information and educational materials to eliminate prejudice, promote human relations, and investigate complaints of this nature.
- 6. Cesar Chavez/Dolores Huerta Community Celebration
- 7. LGBTQ+ Summit
- 8. ADA Awareness Summit
- 9. MLK, Jr. Commemoration Celebration

10. Lantern Festival (Asian American)
11. Proclamations: Recognizing community celebrations and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion i.e. Hispanic Heritage Month, Women's History Month
12. Citywide Diversity Calendar
13. ReACT: Responding to Aurora's Critical Topics is a group of community members who respond to rising community concerns and respond by developing awareness
14. AKCRT – Aurora Key Community Response Team – Serves as a resource to assist the community in addressing any potential explosive or confrontational incidents. AKCRT membership consists of volunteers from area businesses, law enforcement, fire, schools, clergy, city departments and local agencies.
15. ACOF – Aurora Community of Faith – a faith-based organization, not faith specific. The mission is to build a sense of community and common purpose throughout the city of Aurora and to enhance the spiritual, cultural, and social well-being of all city of Aurora residents.

RESOLUTION NO. R2020-\_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF AURORA, COLORADO,  
AFFIRMING AURORA'S COMMITMENT TO VALUING  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse cities in the State of Colorado, and this diversity fuels innovation and supports robust communities and rich cultural life in the City of Aurora and State of Colorado; and

WHEREAS, City Council recognizes that what makes Aurora unique and special is a forward-thinking environment that fosters a healthy community dialogue and acceptance of all people; and

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora will continue to condemn acts of racism and discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, family status or any other consideration made unlawful by local, state or federal law; and

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora established the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in January 2020 to help foster mutual respect, celebrate, and promote understanding of the diversity of the city's population; and

WHEREAS, the city collaborates with other municipalities as members of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to advance racial equity through mindful governance practices, recognizing racial inequities are embedded into government and that racial inequities across all indicators for success are deep and pervasive; and

WHEREAS, human diversity can be defined as differences in race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identities, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and/or mental capabilities, immigration status, housing status, political affiliation, cultural practices or religious beliefs; and

WHEREAS, equity is providing fair treatment, access and opportunity for all people and eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of all groups; and

WHEREAS, focusing on racial equity provides the opportunity for local government to create frameworks, tools and resources that can also be applied to other marginalized people; and

WHEREAS, inclusion is creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued; and

WHEREAS, all humans are possessed with unique, rich cultural histories, backgrounds and personal experiences deserving of universal respect and acceptance; and

WHEREAS, City Council is committed to building a community of staff, elected officials and local partners that hold diversity, equity and inclusion as core values; and

WHEREAS, City Council recognizes diversity, equity and inclusion as essential to positive and healthy communities; and

WHEREAS, City Council will continue its work, in cooperation with our community partners, to ensure our services and programs are accessible and open to all individuals; and

WHEREAS, City Council is committed to ensuring Aurora remains a welcoming, inclusive and safe community for all who live, work and visit here; and

WHEREAS, City Council believes that the strength and vitality of our community comes from our rich diversity of cultures, experiences and faiths, and we celebrate that diversity.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO:

Section 1. The City Council will commit to fostering, supporting and strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion in the city's programs, practices and policies; and

Section 2. The City Council encourages all cities, counties and local governments across the United States to adopt similar commitments to reaffirm their diversity, equity and inclusivity.

Section 3. All resolutions or parts of resolutions of the City in conflict herewith are hereby rescinded.

RESOLVED AND PASSED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MIKE COFFMAN, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
SUSAN BARKMAN, Interim City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela L. Garcia, Assistant City Attorney

## 2021 State Legislative Priorities

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Colorado is facing an affordable housing crisis. Many Colorado residents struggle to find affordable housing in the communities where they work. Colorado's local governments can be a key player in finding a solution by utilizing their local land authority.

**Request:** The City of Aurora supports the CML-initiated legislation that would amend Section 29 of the Colorado Revised Statutes related to Land Use Powers to clarify that local governments may regulate the development and use of land within their jurisdictions in order to promote the new development or redevelopment of affordable housing units; confirms the rent control statute doesn't apply to land use regulations adopted pursuant to this authority; and require local government to provide a menu of options to the developer to comply.

### POLICE REFORM

The death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 while in the custody of the Minneapolis Police Department sparked national protests and has brought renewed focus on the necessity of police reform at the national level. The city has been proactive on reforms inside their own department and supported SB20-217: Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity but believes additional state legislation is needed.

#### **Requests:**

- The city seeks clarity in definitions that were lacking in SB20-217. This includes defining “minor crimes” and the difference between excessive force and reasonable force.
- The city supports a mechanism for due process before POST certification is revoked.
- The city also supports clarification related to data collection from law enforcement’s contacts with civilians including on what information to collect and when departments are required to release the data.

### PROFESSIONAL LICENSING

Local jurisdictions are the government entities that interact with their residents on a day to day basis. Local jurisdictions best understand the unique market conditions inside their boundaries and are best equipped to make licensing decisions on certain professions. To that end the city supports efforts updating certain licensing requirements.

#### **Requests:**

Massage Facilities: The City of Aurora has adopted massage business licensing requirements. The city requests the state legislature create legislation to provide a statutory reference and authority for local jurisdictions to access the Federal Criminal Justice Information for applicants

and owners of Massage Facilities. Federal law requires a reference in State Code. Similar authority exists for liquor licensing and pawn shop licensing.

Currently barber, cosmetology, esthetician, nail technician, hairstylist and other professional licensing in Colorado requires that an applicant provide a social security number to obtain license. Additionally, the exams for many of these professional licenses are only provided in English. The city requests legislation to allow licensure for these professions with a taxpayer identification number. Additionally, the city supports requiring the State to have options available for licensure tests in languages other than English.

Security Guards: Colorado is one of only nine states that do not regulate security guards or security companies. The city requests the state legislature create a state level qualified professional license for security guards with a requirement for professional training and certification including background checks. This licensure should at a minimum apply to guards armed with firearms and less than lethal munitions. A statewide license would allow security guards to move between jurisdictions without needing a license in each jurisdiction and there would be a statewide standard for qualification. Any statewide license should only be for the qualified professionals and should not prohibit the city from licensing individual companies to operate. In addition, the state should authorize the city to utilize Federal CJIS in licensing security companies and verifying the backgrounds of the company owners.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Public transit is a crucial piece of infrastructure that affects low-income and minority communities. RTD has indicated that 40% reductions in service may be necessary to deal with budget related issues. Such cuts stand to disproportionately affect the mobility of low-income and minority communities. The city supports increased state transportation and transit funding that includes an equitable portion of new revenue to cities and other local governments. The city will monitor the recommendations from the RTD Accountability Committee.

**Request:** The city supports efforts to authorize a transportation planning organization (TPO) to exercise the powers of a regional transportation authority to impose various charges, fees, and, with voter approval, visitor benefit, sales, and use taxes to generate transportation funding.

## **MARIJUANA**

As in past sessions, the city will monitor closely any changes the State considers regarding the regulation of recreational and medicinal marijuana consumption. In addition, the city will support local control in the authority to regulate businesses related to the processing, extraction, manufacturing and sales of consumable and industrial hemp.

## **IMMIGRATION**

Aurora welcomes the immigrants and refugees from all over the world that make the city so diverse and international. As such, the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs was created in 2015 to facilitate the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into Aurora's civic, economic, and cultural life. The office oversees the development and implementation of a strategic citywide plan regarding policy, programs and initiatives toward the local immigrant and refugee populations.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2015 seeks to ensure that state and local service providers offer adult education and skills development programs that accelerate achievement of diplomas and credentials among American workers, including immigrants and individuals with limited English language skills. The Title II funds can be used for activities assisting eligible adults with obtaining postsecondary education, training, or employment. Specifically, the funds managed by the State of Colorado serve people with barriers to employment, including English language learners, low income people and immigrants. In addition, WIOA funding can be used for citizenship and civic education programs. The city supports efforts to access and utilize these funds.

In addition, the city will closely monitor state legislation related to improving oversight of and the conditions within private prisons that house individuals with pending immigration status issues.

**Request:** The city also supports legislation concerning replacing the term illegal alien with unauthorized worker as it relates to public contracts for services.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Aurora City Council and city management have developed a vision of growth for the city that focuses on the principles of sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy. To embrace economic sustainability the city created the Aurora Campus for Renewable Energy and the campus represents the city's commitment to renewable energy and the promotion of green jobs. The city is demonstrating the commitment to sustainable energy supplies by hosting solar photovoltaic installations on three city facilities and piloting programs to host additional installations. The city started the SmartFleet Initiative in 2010 that led an effort to convert the city fleet to electric vehicles and to expanding electric charging infrastructure throughout the city.



The city supports state legislation that supports the principles of sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy by tracking and supporting state legislation that support these aims. This includes:

- Repealing the ban on local government regulation of plastics – SB20-010
- Expanding production of alternative energy and renewable energy standards
- Expanding tax credits that promote use of electric vehicles and EV infrastructure
- Pursuing green building standards

### **CIVIL RIGHTS**

It is the policy of the city of Aurora that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any operation of the city. The Colorado Fair Employment Practices Act makes it illegal for an employer to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, sexual orientation, and physical or mental disability. The city embraces efforts at the state legislature that uphold these principles by supporting bills that expand protections and opposing bills that seek to discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community.

## **2021 CITY OF AURORA FEDERAL PRIORITIES**

### **POLICE REFORM**

**Subject: Measures to increase the integrity and accountability of law enforcement**

#### **Congress**

The death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 while in the custody of the Minneapolis Police Department sparked national protests and has brought renewed focus on the necessity of police reform at the national level. The city has been proactive on reforms inside their own department but believes federal legislation is needed.

**Requests:** The city supports the following principles to be included in future congressional legislation surrounding police reform.

- Justice for Breonna Taylor Act - The Justice for Breonna Taylor Act introduced in the U.S. Senate would prohibit no-knock warrants, which allows law enforcement officials to forcibly enter a home without announcing their authority or purpose. The city supports this legislation.
- National Ban of Chokeholds - The city supports a national ban of the use of chokeholds, carotid holds, sleeper holds or similar techniques by law enforcement.
- Emmett Till Antilynching Act – The Emmett Till Antilynching Act passed by the U.S. House of Representatives establishes a new criminal civil rights violation for lynching. Specifically, a person who conspires to commit certain civil rights offenses (e.g., a hate crime act) is subject to criminal penalties. The city supports this legislation.
- National Database – The city supports the creation of a national database to track officer wrongdoing.
- Failure to Intervene – The city supports legislation that would create a national standard to hold police officers accountable in a situation where they fail to intervene to prevent another officer from using excessive force.
- Eliminating Mandatory Minimum Prison Sentences – The city supports legislation that would end mandatory minimum prison sentences.
- Ending Civil Asset Forfeiture - The city supports legislation that would end civil asset forfeiture by law enforcement.
- Ending Qualified Immunity Act – The city supports the Ending Qualified Immunity Act introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives that would eliminate qualified immunity and restore Americans’ ability to obtain relief when police officers violate their constitutionally secured rights.

### **CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND**

**Subject: Measures to broaden disbursement and use of funds**

#### **Congress**

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Stability Act (CARES Act) included the Coronavirus Relief Fund which set aside \$150 billion to provide direct funding to states and local governments to combat the pandemic. This fund included a requirement that local governments have a population of at least 500,000 in order to directly access these funds. The legislation also included a December 31, 2020 deadline for state and local governments to utilize the funds

**Requests:** The city of Aurora urges Congress to consider additional funds for the Coronavirus Relief Fund and lower the population threshold to access the funds. The city urges Congress to consider extending the deadline to use existing CARES fund past the existing December 31, 2020 date.

## **SMALL BUSINESS**

**Subject: Measures to support small business and workers**

### **Congress**

Due to the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak small businesses have been forced to halt operation due to social distancing requirements and executive orders to cease operations. Small businesses that have been affected include restaurants, coffee shops, breweries, nail salons, massage parlors, retail outlets, and others. Many businesses have chosen to fully close and have laid off workers. In order to assist small businesses and workers the city will support legislation that provides loans to small businesses and requirements to continue to employ workers.

**Requests:** The city supports the following principles to be included in future congressional supplementals to combat the economic effects of the Covid-19 outbreak.

- Small Business Stabilization Fund - The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering designated states and territories low-interest federal disaster loans to small businesses suffering substantial economic injury as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. The city supports additional funding for this program.
- Additional funding for National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Grants: \$100 Million in National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) has been designated in response to COVID-19. The city supports additional funding for this grant program.
- Increase in funding for additional federal grants and flexibility of use for the city to disperse funds to businesses who have been forced to shut down.
- Measures to incentivize participation by local business in statewide Work Share programs.

## **HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS**

**Subject: Federal programs and grants for housing and homelessness**

**Congress, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), & Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**

The Covid-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak has forced the city to reevaluate homeless and housing programs and provision of services. Most city sponsored homeless shelters rely on group living situations that can be detrimental to containing further infection. To that end the city supports measures that provides additional funding for the homeless population to shelter in non-congregant shelters including vacant motel and hotel rooms. Housing assistance is a critical measure to prevent additional renters and homeowners from falling into homelessness. To that end the city supports measures at the federal level to allow flexibility in use of federal grants.

The City's housing authority is currently the recipient of only 85 HUD-VASH vouchers, despite being the third largest City in the state and with a large veteran demographic. With the completed VA Regional Medical Center in Aurora, we anticipate a sharp increase in the number of homeless veterans, making additional HUD-VASH vouchers critical.

**Requests:** The city supports the following principles to be included in future congressional supplementals to combat the economic effects of the Covid-19 outbreak.

- Flexibility in use of CDBG funds including a removal of caps to allow provision of housing for non-congregate shelter for homeless and additional services.
- Increase in additional federal grants and flexibility of use to provide housing for non-congregate shelter for homeless.
- The FHFA and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) have suspended foreclosures and evictions for enterprise-backed mortgages and FHA-insured mortgages through December 31, 2020. The city requests these moratoriums be extended for the duration of the Covid-19 national emergency.
- Support for waivers for renters for federal housing programs so those programs can respond nimbly.
- Emergency Solutions Grant Program - provide additional funds to state and local entities to protect homeless people and those on the brink from becoming homeless from COVID-19 through the Emergency Solutions Grant Program and rental assistance programs for low income individuals and families. Remove the 60% cap that may be used for emergency shelter.
- Support for a suspension of rental and utility payments (through HUD) if loss of income has occurred due to COVID-19.
- Support for additional funds for low income renters currently needing assistance.
- Extension of the CDC moratorium on residential evictions through the duration of the crisis and recission of guidance that allows landlords to challenge tenant declarations and allows landlords to initiate eviction proceedings for nonpayment of rent at any time.

**Request:** The City of Aurora requests Colorado Congressional delegation support for an increase in funding for the CDBG and HOME programs. In addition, the City requests Congress and federal agencies support the following:

- S.923/HR 1978, the Fighting Homelessness Through Services Act, sponsored by Senators Feinstein and Murkowski.
- S.3030, the Eviction Crisis Act, sponsored by Senator Bennet of Colorado
- An increase of the HUD maximum income restrictions for the down payment assistance and the rental assistance program in order to stay relevant in the current market.

- Programs that preserve housing for extremely low-income households, including those that address chronic homelessness among veterans, youth and families.
- An increase in the number of HUD-VASH vouchers allocated for Aurora.
- Raise the Davis-Bacon project threshold to \$250,000 for non-residential and increase the CDBG housing unit threshold to 12 units to coincide with the HOME program.
- Eliminate the 15% set-aside of HOME funds for CHDOs.

## **FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

### **Subject: FEMA guidelines on use of grants and reimbursement of funds**

#### **Congress**

Due to the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak a National Emergency Declaration has been declared and FEMA has been activated. As states and municipalities mobilize into action clear guidelines on how FEMA will reimburse state and local governments is needed.

**Request:** The city requests FEMA allow as much flexibility on how local governments utilize federal funds and that reimbursement for use of funds be broad and all-encompassing.

## **PAID LEAVE/PAID SICK LEAVE**

### **Subject: Tax Credits for Paid Lave/Paid Sick Leave**

#### **Congress**

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act requires businesses and public agencies to provide paid leave and paid sick leave but excludes municipalities from receiving a payroll tax credit that is available for businesses. The city of Aurora urges Congress to support legislation to allow municipalities to be eligible for the payroll tax credit for emergency paid and sick leave. Allowing state and local governments to recoup costs through the payroll tax credit will grant the city the ability to afford these added costs.

**Request:** The city requests that additional funds be designated to allow for municipalities to mitigate this financial cost.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT**

### **Subject: Water Infrastructure**

Aurora Water is committed to operating and maintaining significant water infrastructure. During this pandemic crisis Aurora Water, has suspended water shut-offs for non-payment to ensure residents have access to water during the duration of the crisis. Some customers may struggle with their ability to pay their water bills as a result of the pandemic and this mat compound for a period following the pandemic. Water utilities are well positioned to manage grant or low

interest loan funding to help support customers challenged with income shortages to provide for basic needs such as water service.

**Request:** The city respectfully requests Congress to include funds to allow water utilities to assist struggling customers in covering water service costs during this challenging time.

**Subject: Support for Healthy Forests Legislation**

**Congress, U.S. Forest Service, Fish & Wildlife Service, Army Corps of Engineers**

Aurora water supplies originate in the headwaters of three major basins within Colorado and include the Arapahoe, San Isabel and White River National Forests. Protecting Aurora's watersheds, including these National Forests, from devastating wildfires is critical to the success of the Aurora's mission to enhance and protect the quality of life for Aurora citizens by providing safe, dependable, and sustainable water services. Aurora's municipal water supplies suffered greatly as a result of previous forest fires. Barriers to prevention and restoration from wildfire are natural (forest and soil conditions, physical watershed conditions and the sequence and magnitude of rain falling on the burned area) and man-made (overly burdensome rules, regulations and laws). Healthy Forests will continue to be a priority for resilient and reliable drinking water supplies and request Congress to keep the issue at the forefront for funding and improving on forest treatment actions.

**Requests:** The city of Aurora supports adequate funding for forest programs and the streamlining of the approval process for watershed projects.

**Subject: Transportation Infrastructure**

**Congress**

To quickly respond and provide flexible funds to restore and repair transportation and infrastructure services in communities, Congress should quickly influx significant investment through the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG). STBG can be used widely by local, regional and state partners on almost any transportation asset which will ensure that its quickly utilized on high-priority projects in every region of the U.S. Additionally, to further accelerate its use, remove match requirements so 100% federal investment reaches communities where the needs are based.

**Request:** The city requests Congress consider provisions to accelerate the reimbursement and payment process of the federal transportation programs to ensure that state and local governments do not need to set-aside state or local funds that would otherwise be used to keep people on the job, continue services, or pay businesses for services and goods.

**Subject: Reauthorization of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**

**Congress and Department of Transportation**

The City will closely monitor developments in Congress related to the reauthorization of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015, set to expire in September 2021.

Toward that end, the City would be supportive of legislation that addresses current program funding shortages and adjustments to program regulations.

**Requests:** The city supports the following principles for the Reauthorization of the FAST Act:

- Provisions that provide direct funding to cities and increase local decision-making authority
- Increased funding for FHWA Railway-Highway Crossings (Section 130), a program that provides funds for the elimination of hazards at railway-highway crossings.
- Increased overall funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) and an increase in the percentage of sub-allocation to urbanized areas.
- Increase funding for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities. Provide additional funding for multimodal projects that promote economic development and safety

## **IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY**

**Subject:** Access to testing

**Congress**

Making sure that critical testing for the coronavirus is available widely is also an important priority.

**Request:** The city respectfully request that the upcoming federal recovery package remove current restrictions that prevent Medicaid coverage of testing for green-card holders and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients.

**Subject:** New Deal for New Americans Act

**Congress**

Aurora welcomes the immigrants and refugees from all over the world that make the city so diverse and international. As such, the Office of International and Immigrant Affairs was created in 2015 to facilitate the successful integration of immigrants and refugees into Aurora's civic, economic, and cultural life. The office oversees the development and implementation of a strategic citywide plan regarding policy, programs and initiatives toward the local immigrant and refugee populations.

The New Deal for New Americans Act would establish critical assistance programs for immigrants and refugees to overcome common challenges such a language barriers, employment attainment, and barriers to naturalization. The measure includes several proposals such as

establishment of the “National Office of New Americans”, establishment of the “Federal Initiative on New Americans”, creation of a new “English as a Gateway to Integration Program,” and expansion of legal services and grant programs. This legislation will strengthen current efforts in the area of immigrant integration. This bill was introduced in October 2020.

**Request:** The city of Aurora requests the Colorado Congressional delegation support H.R.4928, the New Deal for New Americans Act and an expansion of the DACA program.

**Subject: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals**

**Congress**

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program allows some individuals with unlawful presence in the United States after being brought to the country as children to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and become eligible for a work permit in the US. Expansion of this program will increase wages, improve health and well-being, reduce the number of households living in poverty, and add stability to the lives of DACA-eligible immigrants.

**Request:** The city of Aurora requests the Colorado Congressional delegation support an expansion of the DACA program.

**Subject: Temporary Protected Status**

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

The Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program was created by a bipartisan act of Congress in 1990. This status, afforded to nationals from some countries affected by armed conflict or natural disaster, allows persons to live and work in the U.S. for limited times. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has ended crucial protections for immigrants from six countries. Over 300,000 people are at risk of losing legal protected status, including more than 3,000 Salvadorians in Colorado. The city of Aurora requests the U.S. Department of Homeland Security renew and extend this program in 2021.

**MILITARY/VETERANS**



**Subject: Support Buckley Air Force Base and the associated economic development in Aurora**

**Congress & Department of Defense**

The City of Aurora is home to Buckley Air Force Base, serving more than 92,000 active duty, National Guard, Reserve and retired personnel throughout Aurora and the surrounding community. The Base hosts the 460<sup>th</sup> Space Wing, a unit of the U.S. Air Force Space Command, as well as the Colorado National Guard 120<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron. Since its establishment in 1943, Buckley Air Force Base has served a critical role in the economic vitality of the City of Aurora. In the face of budget cuts and a potential base realignment and closure process, one of the City's highest priorities is the support of the ongoing mission of the Base.

Toward that end, the City has prioritized the widening and extension of 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. to better support access to the Base. The City of Aurora has also been engaged in a mission-supportive endeavor during the past several years to plan and implement a Compatible Use Buffer Project with a focus on preventing incompatible development around the Base. Funding from the Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program has been key in our successful efforts to create this buffer zone.

Finally, the Defense Community Infrastructure Program - authorized at \$95.3 million in the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act - provides critical funding for off-base but adjacent community infrastructure projects that are key to supporting the Buckley mission. The city will closely monitor the implementation of this program.

**Request:** The City of Aurora asks the Colorado Congressional delegation to continue support of Buckley Air Force Base and assist in directing future missions to the Base. In particular, the City supports efforts to locate US Space Command headquarters at Buckley AFF. The city also supports the Colorado Air National Guard's request for Buckley AFB to be an F-35 bed down base. In addition, the city of Aurora seeks support for future requests of the Defense Community Infrastructure Program as we protect the viability of the Base's operations and defense capabilities.

**MARIJUANA**

**Subject: Cannabis Industry and Banking Regulations**

**Congress, Department of Justice**

In May of 2014, the City Council approved the licensure of retail marijuana establishments throughout the City of Aurora. The Council authorized 24 retail marijuana store licenses, with four licenses allowed in each of the six Council wards. However, the use, possession and sale of cannabis remains a federal crime. This conflict in federal and local marijuana laws has made it difficult for legitimate recreational marijuana businesses to access basic banking services. With financial institutions hesitant to provide services to cannabis businesses, the industry has become cash reliant, creating public safety issues and the potential for money laundering to become more prevalent.

**Request:** The City of Aurora asks the Colorado Congressional delegation to lift the illegality of banking services to the cannabis industry. Toward that end, the City asks for Congress to support H.R.1595: Secure and Fair Enforcement Banking Act that would prohibit penalizing a bank for providing financial services to a legitimate state-sanctioned and regulated cannabis business.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Aurora City Council and city management have developed a vision of growth for the city that focuses on the principles of sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy. To demonstrate its commitment to sustainability principles, the city adopted the theme of sustainability in the update of its 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

**Request:** The city of Aurora requests the Colorado Congressional delegation's support for the principles of sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy. Toward that end the city asks for legislation that incentivizes carbon capture, use and storage; advances alternative fuels; advances energy storage technology; improves energy efficiency; modernizes infrastructure; builds and supports community resilience, and seeks to lower CO2 emissions.