CITY LAUNCHES STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE

A community has countless needs, and the city of Aurora is creating its first-ever citywide strategic plan to ensure these needs are aligned with the city’s policies, procedures and services in coming years.

The plan will serve as a detailed guide for how the city shapes the community’s future and serve as a blueprint for city employees to follow when considering how to best provide services to residents.

The strategic plan will build upon resident input collected during the city’s recent Aurora Places comprehensive planning process. Residents helped drive the goals in Aurora Places, which focus on a strong economy, diversity and equity, housing for all, a healthy community, a thriving environment, an authentic Aurora, easy mobility and active transportation. These goals will guide city departments in creating action steps within the strategic plan.

Residents are invited to choose one of the two community summits being held on Wednesday, April 1, whichever is more convenient to learn more and participate in the citywide strategic planning process:

- 1 to 3 p.m., Tallyn’s Reach Library, 23911 E. Arapahoe Road (light refreshments served)
- 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., The People’s Building, 9995 E. Colfax Ave. (light refreshments, childcare and Spanish-language services provided)

The strategic planning process, which began in February, will be complete this summer. The city has partnered with the Novak Consulting Group to develop the strategic plan.

Learn about metro districts

The city of Aurora will host informational meetings to discuss Title 32 Metropolitan Districts. Each meeting will include a presentation from the Special District Association of Colorado and city staff members, along with a chance for questions and discussion. Join us for one of the meetings scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, April 7, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Fire Station 16 (near Gaylord), 6500 N. Liverpool St.
- Wednesday, April 15, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Tallyn’s Reach Library, 23911 E. Arapahoe Road
- Thursday, April 30, 6 to 7:30 p.m., Central Recreation Center, 18150 E. Vassar Place

For residents who cannot attend one of the meetings, please visit the city’s metro districts resource webpage at AuroraGov.org/MetroDistricts.
Aurora Building Division offering free building trades code classes

The city’s Building Division is now offering free continuing education code training classes through the end of the year for anyone in building and construction trades who needs this type of training for continuing education requirements.

The International Code Council (ICC) recently designated the Building Division as a certified provider of the council’s continuing education code training program through its preferred provider program. Building Division staff will curate, design and teach on-site code curriculum to ICC-certified staff and contractors.

Classes will be offered at the Aurora Municipal Center, 15151 E. Alameda Parkway. To register, visit PPP.ICCsafe.org.

City streetlight evaluation underway in neighborhoods

The city of Aurora has contracted with Xcel Energy and Pike Corp. to evaluate all streetlights located in Aurora. The evaluation is necessary to help convert the streetlights from Xcel Energy to city of Aurora ownership. The city’s ownership of the lights will allow the city to save on monthly streetlighting costs and will allow local control of the lights.

The evaluation is underway, and the work will be complete around the end of June 2020. Field crews from Pike are walking and driving through the city’s neighborhoods, collecting information about each streetlight and taking pictures of the lights. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Access Aurora at 303.739.7000.

Improvements include 10-foot-wide, barrier-separated bi-directional bicycle lanes, on-street bicycle lanes, pavement markings, signage, lighting and physical separation for bicycle facilities, bicycle racks, crossing improvements and a Florida Station Kiss-n-Ride area. For more information on the project and educational videos for both drivers and bicyclists on how to use the new separated bike lanes, visit AuroraGov.org/TrailConnector.

Take a celebratory ride on Aurora’s first separated bike lanes

Aurora’s first separated bike lanes should be ready to ride sometime in March, and a grand opening celebration—on Earth Day, no less—is planned at 10 a.m. April 22.

Bring your bike out to the southeast corner of Utah Park along Jewell Avenue, and join us as we ride along the new Westerly Creek Trail Connector Project. The ride will run along Jewell Avenue, through Jewell Wetlands, north on Potomac Street to the pedestrian bridge over Interstate 225 and past the Florida Station. Riders will continue east on Florida Avenue to conclude at Kingsborough Park where celebratory refreshments will await participants.

The project provides improved connections between regional trails and the Florida Station, in recognition of the need for safe travel for all types of transportation modes. Plans were developed with input from residents and focus on safe ways for bicyclists and pedestrians to get from the Westerly Creek Trail and Toll Gate Creek Trail to the R Line. The project passes three schools, medical facilities, businesses and residences.
Gaylord Rockies expanding

The Gaylord Rockies, Colorado’s largest resort and convention center, will get bigger when construction starts later this year on an $80 million, 317-room expansion.

Opened in December 2018, Gaylord Rockies was the first Marriott property to begin operations with more than 1 million net room nights on the books for all future years. Since then, the 85-acre resort has experienced strong demand and closed the third quarter of 2019 with nearly 1.2 million net group room nights on the books for all future years, a 7.4 percent increase compared to the third quarter of 2018.

“We take great pride in Gaylord Rockies creating a best-in-class large meeting destination for the state of Colorado,” said Ira Mitzner, president and chief executive officer of RIDA Development Corp. “To date, nearly 80 percent of the groups at Gaylord Rockies had never met in Colorado before. We are truly growing the pie for this state.”

The expansion is expected to open in early 2022, bringing the total room count at Colorado’s largest combined resort and convention center to 1,818.

“Gaylord Rockies is one of Aurora’s most significant accomplishments to date and a major driver in our growing economy,” said Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman, noting the 1,500-plus jobs that the resort has brought to Aurora. “The project has put Aurora on the map and I’m proud to see so many new visitors coming here to experience all that our community has to offer.”

ONE pass, TWO Reservoirs—unlimited adventure

Experience the paradise of Aurora and Quincy reservoirs by land and water. Out here, adventure awaits you.

At Aurora Reservoir, rent kayaks and stand-up paddle-boards for a day on the water, cast the perfect fishing line, discover its natural surroundings through interactive nature programs, lounge leisurely at the swim beach, reserve a private shelter for all your celebrations and enjoy miles of scenic trails alongside your four-legged friend or on your favorite bike. The reservoir is open year-round, although some activities are limited by season.

Whether it’s fishing, fun or fitness, there’s something for everyone at Quincy Reservoir, opening March 1 with hours from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. but changing monthly. A beautiful, natural setting, Quincy Reservoir is located just east of South Buckley Road on Quincy Avenue.

The cost for both Quincy Reservoir and Aurora Reservoir is $10 for a day pass on site. Affordable annual passes are available for purchase at the reservoirs or at the Aurora Municipal Center Parks, Recreation & Open Space office, 15151 E. Alameda Parkway, Fourth Floor. Visit AuroraGov.org/OutHere for more information.

E-CYCLE EVENTS
March 28, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Central Facilities Recycling Station
13646 E. Elsworth Ave.

Aug. 29, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Tallyn’s Reach Library
23911 E. Arapahoe Road
For a complete list of acceptable items, visit AuroraGov.org/Recycle.

This event is open to residents and non-residents. Electronics are collected and recycled by Techno Rescue. $5 drop-off fee per household, plus some additional fees may apply for some items.

CESAR CHAVEZ AND DOLORES HUERTA COMMUNITY CELEBRATION
April 7, 6 to 8 p.m.
Aurora Municipal Center
15151 E. Alameda Parkway
Video, spoken art and music performances at 6 p.m., followed by a “La Fiesta” celebration with food and beverage, entertainment and hands-on crafts and activities for the whole family; free and open to the public.

“FREAKY FRIDAY”
April 17 to May 10
Aurora Fox Arts Center
9900 E. Colfax Ave.
Tickets at 303.739.1970 or AuroraFox.org

ANTIQUE APPRAISAL FAIR
April 25, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Aurora Central Library
14949 E. Alameda Parkway, Community Room
Have your items appraised, with all proceeds benefiting the Aurora History Museum. $10 per item; maximum of five items.
For a timed-entry registration, visit AuroraMuseumFoundation.org.

VOLUNTEER EXPO
April 21, 2 to 5 p.m.
Aurora Municipal Center
15151 E. Alameda Parkway
Visit with community organizations with volunteer needs and how you can help. An Aurora Community Spirit Awards reception and ceremony will follow.

QUILT SALE
April 30, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
May 1, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
May 2, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Aurora Center for Active Adults
30 Del Mar Circle
Admit it – you’re tired of turf. It’s time for a change.

Water-wise landscapes are sustainable and drought-tolerant, can thrive on less than half the amount of water needed for turf and often require less maintenance. Not sure where to start? Aurora Water can help you through the process.

- Start by checking out our water conservation classes at AuroraGov.org/WaterClasses. Whether you’d like to learn more about water-wise landscapes, install a sprinkler system or would like to grow a vegetable garden using less water, we have a class for you.
- Receive a free, professional landscape design. Available only for Aurora Water customers, we’ll work with you to design a low-water landscape that’s beautiful and will help save you time and money.
- Apply for a rebate. We offer rebates for installing water-wise landscapes, irrigation systems and more. Now is the perfect time to get started on a rebate so that you’ll be ready to go when spring rolls around.

For more information, call 303.739.7195 or email conservation@auroragov.org. Go to AuroraGov.org/Rebates for information.

**SIGN UP FOR BUDGET BILLING BY APRIL 15**

Spread your water utility costs evenly throughout the year by enrolling in budget billing. Aurora Water calculates your utility costs, previous usage and seasonal fluctuations in water consumption to provide a more predictable bill each month. You will still receive a monthly bill to monitor your consumption, actual charges and actual balance.

Customers must enroll in AutoPay to qualify for budget billing. AutoPay uses a customer’s credit card, debit card or checking account to process payments. The system also allows customers to access their water account, including billing and payment history. You may still sign up for AutoPay even if you don’t want to enroll in budget billing.

The 2020 applications are only accepted through April 15. Sign up at AuroraWater.org. For more information, call 303.739.7388.

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**Water conservation classes**

Learn how to lower your water bill, help conserve water and create an incredible landscape. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.** For more information or to register, visit AuroraGov.org/WaterClasses or call 303.739.7195.

**Irrigation clock and controller-programming**

Learn how to prepare your irrigation clock for maximum efficiency. We’ll cover the basics of how they operate, then give you the knowledge to feel confident taking control of your system. Have a smart weather-based controller? Don’t worry, we’ll cover those as well.

April 11, 9 to 10:30 a.m.
Aurora Central Library, Small Community Room
14949 E. Alameda Parkway

**Introduction to Water-wise Landscaping**

You’re curious about a low-water landscape, but where do you start? Knock your creativity into gear as we introduce the necessary foundations of creating a functional water-wise landscape. Also included, landscape ideas and the beautiful and resilient plants that replace thirsty turf.

April 27, 5:30 to 7 p.m.
Tallyn’s Reach Library, Community Room
23911 E. Arapahoe Road

**Water Billing Questions:** 303.739.7388 • **Service Questions:** 303.326.8645 • AuroraWater.org