COVID-19: RECOVERY IN AURORA

Recovery from the public health crisis is in progress, and the Aurora City Council continues to support initiatives that are helping residents, businesses and the community move forward.

A survey of residents informed the city about the community’s most pressing needs in the midst of COVID-19. The city has been working to address two of those—food and housing—directly through the Aurora Mobile Food Pantry (see related story), the Aurora Rental Assistance Program, which provided more than $600,000 in rental assistance to residents in May and a hotel-based respite center to help those facing homelessness.

To support businesses as they begin to reopen and work toward a sustainable recovery, the city provided more than 100 restaurant, retail, service and entertainment small businesses and arts-related nonprofits with grant and loan funds through the Aurora Economic Relief Program to ease the economic stress related to COVID-19.

That program was followed by the Aurora Economic Recovery Program, which gave $6 million in grants from the Arapahoe County CARES Program and the Adams County CARES Program to help small and mid-sized businesses and eligible nonprofits to reopen or modify their business plans and facilities to serve customers in a safe way.

At the same time, Aurora Ramps Up loosened requirements and waived fees to allow restaurants to open in temporary spaces outdoors.

It’s critical that we all work together—wearing a face covering, social distancing, washing hands frequently and supporting local businesses—to ensure a successful recovery.

The city is continuing with plans on how city facilities and operations will function moving forward. To find out about the many city services available online, visit AuroraGov.org/OnlineServices.

For resources and updates, visit AuroraGov.org/COVID-19, and follow us on our social media @AuroraGov on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and on our agency account on Nextdoor. Feel free to reach out to Access Aurora during regular business hours at access@auroragov.org or 303.739.7000.

Upcoming Aurora City Council Town Meetings

Aurora City Council town meetings are open to all. This publication went to print in early June. Please call 303.739.7015 or visit AuroraGov.org/Council to confirm meeting times, dates and locations.

Ward I Town Meeting
Council Member Crystal Murillo
• Aug. 20, 6-7:30 p.m.
Moorhead Recreation Center
9898 E. Colfax Ave.
• Sept. 24, 6-7:30 p.m.
Martin Luther King Jr. Library
9898 E. Colfax Ave.

Ward II Town Meeting
Council Member Nicole Johnston
• Aug. 20, 6:30-8 p.m.
Central Recreation Center
18150 E. Vassar Place
• Sept. 17, 6:30-8 p.m.
Beck Recreation Center
800 Telluride St.

Ward III Town Meeting
Council Member Marsha Berzins
• Aug. 12, 6:30-8 p.m.
• Sept. 9, 6:30-8 p.m.
Aurora Municipal Center, Aurora Room
15151 E. Alameda Parkway

Ward IV Town Meeting
Council Member Juan Marcano
• Aug. 20, 6:30-8 p.m.
• Sept. 17, 6:30-8 p.m.
Please call 303.739.7015 for location.

Ward V Town Meeting
Council Member Alison Coombs
• Aug. 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Heather Gardens Clubhouse
2888 S. Heather Gardens Way
• Sept. 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Central Recreation Center
18150 E. Vassar Place

Ward VI Town Meeting
Council Member Françoise Bergan
• Sept. 16, 6-8 p.m.
Heritage Eagle Bend Clubhouse
23155 E. Heritage Parkway
The Census is still in progress and your community needs you. The current deadline to respond to the 2020 Census is Oct. 31, and it has never been easier to respond to the census on your own—all without having to meet a census taker.

The 2020 Census requires counting a diverse and growing population in our city. The 2020 Census is important because it will determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives, inform hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding, and provide data that will impact our community for the next decade. Responding to the 2020 Census is safe and secure. Individual responses are confidential and protected by law.

Respond today and make Aurora the city with the highest self-response rate in the nation! Go to AuroraCensus2020.org or call 1.844.330.2020.

**Complete the census today.**

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**AUGUST MEANS MORE FREE FOOD FOR AURORA RESIDENTS**

Aurora residents in need of food may visit the Aurora Mobile Food Pantry through the end of August.

More than 450,000 pounds of food are being distributed to community members this summer through this weekly mobile food pantry, a joint partnership between the city of Aurora and Aurora Interfaith Community Services. It’s part of the city’s continuous efforts to provide needed services to residents in response to the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Food items vary by week but have included ready-to-eat meals, canned and boxed goods, grains, fresh produce and dairy, juice and protein such as eggs, chicken, and fish. On average, a family of four receives enough food for one week. In addition to Aurora Interfaith Community Services, the Food Bank of the Rockies, We Don’t Waste, SECORCares, and Tri-County Health Department’s Food in Communities have provided food and resources for the distribution events.

In addition to providing the community with access to food, the mobile food pantry has also distributed more than 15,000 pounds of pet food thanks to the city’s Animal Services Division and the Colorado Pet Pantry.

More than 50 volunteers, including community members, city employees and Aurora Police Department officers, support the mobile food pantry weekly, giving these volunteers an opportunity to make a difference in their community.

For August locations and hours—and to learn how you can support the mobile food pantry—visit AuroraGov.org/MobileFoodPantry or call 720.557.6444.

Photo ID or other proof of Aurora residency is required. All Aurora households are eligible, and emergency food kits are also available for those experiencing homelessness. If you are driving to the mobile food pantry, remain in your car and wait your turn in line; do not park and leave your vehicle. If you are walking, remember to practice social distancing while waiting your turn and wear a face covering.

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**BURN RESTRICTION REMAINS IN EFFECT**

Get the latest on Burn Restrictions impacting Aurora. You can find the latest news about what is permissible at AuroraGov.org/Fire.

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**COMMUNITY POLICE TASK FORCE UPDATE**

The Aurora City Council was scheduled in June to appoint members of the Community Police Task Force that will review current police operations and procedures and make recommendations about changes and potential community input on critical incidents. The task force will include leaders and advocates from the community of faith, NAACP, criminal justice reform organizations, educators, Aurora Key Community Response Team, police labor organizations as well as individuals from the community.

Learn more at AuroraGov.org/PublicSafetyInitiatives.
First protected bike lanes in Aurora now open

Aurora’s first—and long-awaited—separated bike lanes are ready to ride.

The project provides improved connections between regional trails and the Florida Light Rail 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.

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 Light Rail Station Kiss-n-Ride area. Separated bike lanes are installed on portions of Potomac from Jewell to Louisiana, Florida from Abilene to Chambers, and Mexico from Idalia to Buckley.

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.

Gruber heading up Aurora’s Space Command headquarters competition

In June, Aurora City Council selected At-large Council Member Dave Gruber to be the city of Aurora’s designated representative to the Office of Governor Jared Polis and to the Department of the Air Force (DAF) during the process for selecting a military installation to be the first headquarters for the newly formed U.S. Space Command. The DAF, on behalf of the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense, will conduct the selection process.

Prior to being elected to the Aurora City Council, Gruber had a distinguished career in the U.S. Air Force, retiring at the rank of colonel. His last assignment was as a senior commander at Buckley Air Force Base (AFB) in Aurora, which is one of two Colorado communities under consideration. He then worked as a senior system engineer for Raytheon in Aurora and as the vice president of satellite operations at Nortel Government Solutions.

Under the process established by the Pentagon, mayors with nearby military installations must submit a letter explaining why the base in their community best meets the criteria to be the first permanent headquarters for U.S. Space Command. An endorsement by the governor is also required, and both nominating letters were due June 30.

In Colorado, Gov. Jared Polis tasked the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Diana Primavera, with the responsibility of assembling the letters from Colorado Springs and Aurora, the two cities expected to be nominated.

According to the Department, “when fully established, U.S. Space Command will have approximately 1,400 military and civilian personnel working in the headquarters.”

Name change reflects department priorities

To better reflect the city’s priorities of addressing affordable housing, homelessness and neighborhood support, the city of Aurora’s Neighborhood Services Department has been renamed the Department of Housing and Community Services.

As part of this reorganization, the Community Relations Division, which had formerly been part of Neighborhood Services, has joined the city’s recently created Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The Department of Housing and Community Services now includes the following divisions:

- **Animal Services**, which provides for the care and protection of Aurora’s pets and other domestic animals, including the Aurora Animal Shelter and Animal Protection Officers
- **Community Development**, which oversees the city’s multi-departmental strategy to assure a continuum of housing that meets the needs of Aurora’s residents
- **Homelessness Program**, which oversees the city’s homelessness efforts, including the Aurora Day Resource Center, House Aurora Partnership and Aurora Community Outreach Team in coordination with community partners
- **Neighborhood Support**, which works closely with neighborhood organizations and residents through Code Enforcement and the Neighborhood Liaison program

Community Relations, which has moved to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, is responsible for advocating for the effective use of available human, community and social service resources. The division oversees the Human Relations Commission, Veterans’ Affairs Commission, the Aurora Key Community Response Team, ReACT (Responding to Aurora’s Critical Topics), the Aurora Community of Faith and other community-led connections between residents and the city. This move will help Community Relations expand its reach across city departments and ensure a broader community focus.

Global Fest, Aurora’s annual celebration of international culture, will not take place as a large, in-person event this year on the Aurora Municipal Center Great Lawn because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, but that doesn’t mean all festivities are canceled. Aurora’s Office of International and Immigrant Affairs and Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are planning a virtual celebration in August to showcase some of our community’s rich heritage. Go to AuroraGov.org/GlobalFest for more information.
Customized watering program increases water efficiency

The Know Your Flow (KYF) program can help residents save more water, which also means more money in their pockets. Participants receive a monthly email, which includes a graph similar to what Xcel Energy sends. These reports assist participants with evaluating their water use compared to the recommendations customized for their property.

KYF also takes the guess work out of how long turf should be watered. From April to October, water conservation staff sends detailed weekly emails with the recommended watering times based upon where a customer lives.

To sign up for KYF, go to SurveyMonkey.com/r/KnowYourFlow. For more information, visit AuroraWater.org or call 303.739.7195.

AUGUST WATERING SCHEDULE

Three days per week

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<th>POP-UPS</th>
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<th>ROTARY NOZZLES</th>
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<td>5 MINUTES</td>
<td>9 MINUTES</td>
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CYCLE-AND-SOAK TECHNIQUE

Automatic sprinkler systems work best with the cycle-and-soak technique. For example, if you have pop-up sprinkler heads, you run each zone for five minutes, three times a day, giving the water at least an hour to soak in between cycles.

QUESTIONS? 303.739.7195

Be prepared for floods

Colorado’s monsoon season is typically in July and August when shifts in wind patterns cause scattered to widespread showers and thunderstorms. With these unpredictable weather patterns, heavy rains and increased risk of floods are possible. Although not limited to just these months, there are simple things you can do to prepare and protect yourself and your loved ones if flooding occurs.

- Know the flood warning signals: A watch means severe weather. A warning means severe weather including flooding, tornados, etc. are occurring or imminent.
- Sign up for the city’s emergency notification system by searching Everbridge at AuroraGov.org.
- Do not drive, walk or allow children to play in or near flood water. Six inches of fast-moving water is powerful enough to knock down an adult, and only 12 inches of rushing flood water can move a car.
- Make an emergency supply kit for your home and prepare a flood evacuation plan.

For more information on how to prepare for floods and other natural disasters, visit AuroraGov.org/Flood.

Win $100 credit for your water-wise landscape

Whether you designed it yourself or you had someone else do the work, you’ve put a lot of love into your low-water landscape. The results, we’re sure, are fabulous.

Now it’s time to be rewarded for your effort. Submit an application and three high-resolution photos for our Water-wise Landscape Award, and if your landscape wins, you receive a $100 credit on your water bill. If someone you know has a gorgeous low-water landscape, we also accept nominations.

Applications and photos are due by Aug. 15 and winners will be notified by Sept. 1. Restrictions apply, so visit AuroraWater.org for information and to apply. Questions? Call 303.739.7195.