AGENDA

**Planning and Economic Development Policy Committee**

**Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 8:30 a.m.**
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

Public Participation Dialing Instructions
Call in Number: (720)388-8447
Access Code: 332 020 763#

Click here to join the Teams meeting

Council Member Françoise Bergan, Chair
Council Member Curtis Gardner, Vice Chair
Council Member Danielle Jurinsky, Member

Council Goal: Be a great place to locate, expand and operate a business and provide for well-planned growth and development.

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**Pages**

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Approval of Minutes** 1

   May 14, 2025 Draft Subject to Approval Councilmember Bergan

3. **General Business**

   3.a **Housing UDO Analysis Update** 16

   Housing UDO (Code) Analysis Update
   Sponsor name: Francois Bergan
   Staff Source/Legal Source: Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development/Lena McClelland, Assistant City Attorney
   Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 10/5

   3.b **Summary of Land Use Legislation that Passed** 19

   Summary of Land Use Legislation that Passed
   Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development/Lena McClelland, Assistant City Attorney
   Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 10/5

## 4. Miscellaneous Matters for Consideration

### 4.a Aurora Economic Development Council

NO REPORT

### 4.b Havana Business Improvement District

Chance Horiuchi

### 4.c Aurora Chamber of Commerce

NO REPORT

### 4.d Planning Commission

NO REPORT

### 4.e Oil and Gas Committee

NO REPORT

### 4.f Business Advisory Board

NO REPORT

### 4.g Retail

NO REPORT

### 4.h Small Business

NO REPORT

### 4.i Visit Aurora

NO REPORT

## 5. Confirm Next Meeting Date

Tentatively scheduled for July 9, 2025, at 8:30 AM MT.

## 6. Adjournment

# PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

**Date:** **May 14, 2025**
**Time:** **8:30 am**

| | |
|---|---|
| Members Present | Chair: Council Member Francoise Bergan, Vice Chair: Council Member Curtis Gardner, Council Member Danielle Jurinsky |
| Others Present | Aja Tibbs, Alison Lueck, Ani Karabashian, Ariana Muca, Ashvina Patel, Becky Hogan, Bill Wichterman, Blake Fulenwider, Brad Pierce, Brandon Cammarata, Brenda Kenney, Brian Rulla, Brit Vigil, Bruce Dalton, Cathy DeWolf, Chad Argentar, Chance Horiuchi, Connor Bailey, Council Member Steve Sundberg, Crystal Vigil, Daniel Krzyzanowski, David Scott, Deborah Bickmire, Gayle Jetchick, Gregg Johnson, Jake Calegari, James Schireman, Jeannine Rustad, Jeffrey Moore, Jennifer Orozco, Jeremiah Fettig, Jose Rodriguez, Julie Patterson, Kelly Bish, Laura Perry, Leah Ramsey, Lena McClelland, Leticia Callanen, Maria Alvarez, Marisa Noble, Maurice Healy, Melissa Rogers, Michael Kerrigan, Mindy Parnes, Morgan Cullen, Morgan Jennings, Naomi Colwell, Rachel Allen, Robert Oliva, Sarah Wile, Sarah Woodson, Stacy Wasinger, Stephen E. Rodriguez, Steve Timms, Sunny Banka, Thomas Blevins, Tod Kuntzelman, Tom Oldenburg, Trevor Vaughn, Yuriy Gorlov |

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

## 2. APPROVAL OF APRIL 9, 2025, DRAFT MINUTES–COUNCIL MEMBER BERGAN

**2.a.** The minutes were approved.

## 3. GENERAL BUSINESS

### 3.a. 2025 -2027 Visit Aurora Strategic Plan

*Summary of Issue and Discussion:*
Bruce Dalton, Visit Aurora

Bruce Dalton opened the presentation by greeting committee members and introducing himself as the President and CEO of Visit Aurora. He stated that the purpose of his presentation was to outline Visit Aurora's 2025–2027 Strategic Plan and to provide an update on current economic trends affecting the city's tourism sector.

B. Dalton reported that the city experienced a 17% decrease in lodging tax collections during the first quarter of 2025 compared to the same period in 2024, primarily due to business and federal government travel declines. The Destination Marketing Fee also fell short of budget projections by $66,000. He noted that these budget impacts directly affected Visit Aurora's operational planning for the current year. In response, the organization is working with its board and hotel partners to implement new strategies, including promoting Aurora's hotels through online travel agencies and launching a leisure-focused campaign targeting a growing segment of travelers combining business and leisure travel, often referred to as "bleisure."

B. Dalton indicated that the outlook for the summer season was optimistic. He highlighted the return of key sporting events, including the Triple Crown Softball Tournament, which will lead into the July 4th holiday weekend. He further noted that planning for the 2025 Aurora Borealis Festival, scheduled for October 10–11 at High Prairie Park in Painted Prairie, is progressing. While sponsorship opportunities for the festival are more limited than in the previous year, the organization remains committed to its long-term goal of making the festival financially self-sustaining.

He explained that the development of the 2025–2027 Strategic Plan began in July 2024 in partnership with Mission to Market, a marketing agency that frequently works with the Colorado Tourism Office. The planning process included internal surveys of staff and board members, bi-monthly leadership meetings, and a strategic board workshop held in September 2024. Visit Aurora's Board of Directors officially adopted the plan in November 2024.

B. Dalton outlined the composition of the board, which includes Chair Rick Crandall (Colorado Freedom Memorial), Council Member Stephanie Hancock (City Council Liaison), Deputy City Manager Laura Perry, Lori Troji (Chief of Staff, Fitzsimons Innovation Community), and Ginger White-Bernetti (Director of Library and Cultural Services). B. Dalton has served in his role for eight years.

He reaffirmed that Visit Aurora's mission and core values—adventure, collaboration, creativity, diversity, and service—remain unchanged since their adoption in 2022. He stated that in 2023, the city generated $405 million in direct visitor spending, benefiting restaurants, hotels, attractions, and small businesses, supporting local tourism jobs, and contributing to the city's tax base.

B. Dalton identified four strategic pillars forming the foundation of the three-year plan: sales and marketing, destination alignment, organizational strength, and destination management. Under sales and marketing, Visit Aurora aims to increase group business by identifying key industry verticals, developing group-specific business plans, and addressing factors contributing to lost business. B. Dalton shared that the organization recently hosted two successful in-market events for meeting planners in Washington, D.C.. He also emphasized ongoing support for tourism businesses through co-op marketing programs.

Regarding destination alignment, B. Dalton explained that Visit Aurora will continue working closely with the City of Aurora, the Aurora Economic Development Council, and the Aurora Chamber of Commerce to pursue tourism-related investment opportunities. The organization also plans to distribute visitor economy updates, conduct biennial resident sentiment surveys, and launch a Destination Ambassador Program to foster community pride and business engagement.

Under organizational strength, B. Dalton noted that Visit Aurora is exploring new funding mechanisms and assessing its role in developing, owning, or managing events. Regarding destination management, he stated that the organization is collaborating with the Colorado Tourism Office on a cultural tourism development plan and is pursuing grant funding to support research and implementation. The organization also plans to establish a visitor experience grant program to support existing events and evaluate their tourism value.

B. Dalton concluded his remarks by restating the plan's priority goals: increasing overnight stays through business, group, and leisure travel; supporting the development of events, venues, and attractions; expanding awareness of Aurora as a destination; and aligning tourism initiatives with the city's broader economic development strategy. He thanked the committee for their time and invited questions.

- Chair Bergan thanked Mr. B. Dalton for the presentation and opened the floor for questions.
- CM Gardner thanked B. Dalton for the presentation and asked about Visit Aurora's role in special event planning. He specifically inquired whether the strategic objective under organizational strength to evaluate the organization's event management role was tied to plans. He referenced the success of the Aurora Borealis Festival as a potential indicator of Visit Aurora's capability in this area and asked whether there were plans to expand this function.
- B. Dalton responded that Visit Aurora remained open to event creation and ownership opportunities. He shared that the organization's Destination Management Committee had engaged in discussions with Deputy City Manager L. Perry and Council Member S. Hancock regarding ways Visit Aurora could support existing or prospective city festivals by partnering with the city or assuming direct management responsibilities.
- CM Jurinsky then posed a series of detailed questions. She asked B. Dalton to clarify which sporting events Visit Aurora was directly responsible for bringing to Aurora, referencing the softball tournaments he had mentioned earlier. She stated that she had personal knowledge of tournaments arriving



3

in the city long before Visit Aurora's founding, particularly those held at facilities such as Olympic Park. She expressed concern that Visit Aurora might be taking credit for historically occurring events independently of the organization.

- CM Jurinsky further questioned the organization's contributions to the Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center. She shared that Gaylord had indicated that its internal team was responsible for marketing and event acquisition and that Visit Aurora had minimal impact on their operations. She also noted that Gaylord does not remit sales tax to the city of Aurora, raising concerns about its inclusion in Visit Aurora's promotional materials.
- CM Jurinsky then turned to financial concerns. She stated that Visit Aurora receives between $4 and $5 million annually from the city, combining lodging tax revenues and the city-approved $2 per night Destination Marketing Fee. In contrast, she noted that the Aurora Economic Development Council (AEDC) receives $500,000 and the Aurora Chamber of Commerce receives $75,000 annually. She cited the organization's choice to lease space at the Stanley Marketplace as an example of potentially high overhead. She questioned whether Visit Aurora's office and personnel costs were an appropriate use of city revenue. She also noted that Visit Aurora appeared to have recently expanded its staff.
- CM Jurinsky explained that she had been approached by a growing group of Aurora hotel owners who opposed the $2 nightly fee. She shared that these hoteliers had fought the fee when it was introduced and now believed it contributed to declining bookings, particularly compared to hotels in surrounding cities that do not impose such charges. She emphasized that these concerns had grown into a broader movement and that the hotel owners intended to raise the issue again.
- She also criticized Visit Aurora's former website content, noting that it prominently featured events hosted at the Stanley Marketplace, including drag queen bingo and drag queen story time. She suggested that such programming might not reflect citywide interests and questioned whether tax revenues should support marketing these events. She expressed concern over the organization's apparent emphasis on promoting the Stanley area and questioned the decision to include Denver hotels in Visit Aurora's listings. According to her, some Denver hotel owners had been promoted on the first page of Visit Aurora's site in exchange for a modest annual membership fee. Aurora hotels paying the $2 per night fee were listed on subsequent pages.
- CM Jurinsky reiterated that she expected continued pressure from local hotel owners to reconsider Visit Aurora's funding model. She stated that the city's public safety needs, including two new fire stations, were more critical than continued financial support for an organization she believed had not demonstrated proportional value. She emphasized her desire to see a path toward self-sustaining funding for Visit Aurora. She expressed strong reservations about continuing current financial support levels without that direction.



4

- Chair Bergan acknowledged the comments and asked whether B. Dalton wished to respond.
- B. Dalton thanked CM Jurinsky for the feedback and responded that he would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss each of the concerns raised. He offered additional information on Visit Aurora's role in supporting sporting events, the organization's engagement with the Gaylord Rockies Resort, and details about its office space and staffing. He affirmed his pride in Visit Aurora's work and reiterated his belief in the organization's positive impact on Aurora's economic growth and tourism sector. B. Dalton stated that he had been recruited for the position because of his experience working with Gaylord properties in other destinations. He agreed to arrange a meeting between CM Jurinsky and Gaylord leadership to further clarify Visit Aurora's contributions. He also noted that Visit Aurora had submitted financial documents to the city and would happily review them in detail.
- CM Jurinsky confirmed her willingness to meet and stated that her remarks were based on information shared directly with her by Gaylord representatives.
- CM Sundberg thanked B. Dalton and reiterated his longstanding support for sports tourism in Aurora. He noted that Sports Illustrated once recognized Aurora as a Sports Town USA, and recalled a decades-long association with the Fireworks Tournament. He remarked that while adult softball has declined, sports such as pickleball and golf are rising. He asked what new tournaments were being targeted and what Visit Aurora was doing to promote the 225 corridor of hotels, which he felt had lost visibility compared to newer developments near the Gaylord and 40th Avenue. He emphasized the importance of not overlooking the 225 corridor as development trends shift.
- B. Dalton responded that Visit Aurora strives to promote all city areas, including the Havana Business District and Southlands. He explained that although the organization is based at the Stanley Marketplace, which draws approximately two million annual visitors, the office's location does not dictate the focus of its promotional work. He said that event listings on Visit Aurora's platform are driven by submissions from organizers across the city. Regarding sports tourism, B. Dalton stated that in earlier years, Visit Aurora pursued tournament bookings at industry events, but facility availability was often a limiting factor. Since the city controls bookings and pricing for municipal facilities, Visit Aurora has limited leverage to guarantee access for prospective events. He recently met with the city manager to explore a strategy for reserving dedicated blocks of facility time for use in sports tourism outreach. He added that Visit Aurora currently lacks access to a city-managed calendar of Aurora Sports Park events and suggested that this resource would help businesses and residents plan accordingly.
- CM Jurinsky echoed CM Sundberg's comments and emphasized that many of the tournaments referenced have occurred in Aurora for decades, independent of Visit Aurora. She praised the city's recent efforts to reorient the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Department toward a business-focused model. She noted hiring a new department director and

stated that the council had instructed PROS to lead recruiting for new sporting events. She cited her success in helping attract a cricket league and emphasized the city's goal of broadening its portfolio of hosted events.

- CM Jurinsky then raised further concerns regarding Visit Aurora's finances. She reiterated her discomfort with B. Dalton's reported salary and questioned the organization's overall overhead costs, particularly its lease at the Stanley Marketplace. She suggested that such expenditures were questionable given other critical needs in the city, including fire station construction. She stated that Visit Aurora appeared to be overstating its role in legacy events and expressed disappointment that the strategic plan lacked a clear pathway toward financial self-sufficiency. She warned that Aurora hotel owners remain opposed to the $2 Destination Marketing Fee and that their concerns are growing. She stated that these business owners feel unheard and believe the fee puts them at a competitive disadvantage compared to nearby jurisdictions. She expressed disappointment that the presentation did not outline a plan for long-term funding reform and reiterated her concerns about Visit Aurora's focus and effectiveness.
- B. Dalton said he would welcome a meeting with CM Jurinsky to review and address her concerns. He emphasized that destination marketing organizations nationwide are funded similarly and that Aurora's model is not unusual. He affirmed that Visit Aurora's finances are publicly available and transparent. B. Dalton stated that his salary is consistent with that of peer organizations in comparable cities regarding staff compensation. He expressed pride in the organization's accomplishments and reaffirmed Visit Aurora's value to Aurora's tourism economy. He closed by reiterating his openness to continue this discussion and collaboration.
- Chair Bergan concluded the discussion by thanking B. Dalton and asking for clarification regarding the 17% decline in lodging tax. She wondered whether the figure applied specifically to the first quarter of 2025 and requested clarification on the underlying causes.
- B. Dalton confirmed that the decrease applied to the first quarter and cited declines in transient and government travel as primary factors. He noted that this had particularly affected hotels along the 225 corridor, and that lower travel volumes from Buckley Space Force Base and related vendors had contributed significantly to the decline.
- Chair Bergan acknowledged the explanation and added that she supports expanding Aurora's sports tourism infrastructure. She referenced her prior work on the Citizen Budget Committee and restated her long-standing recommendation to build an additional sports complex. She suggested that a site near the Southeast Recreation Center in Ward VI would be ideal and emphasized the need to meet growing facility demand. She thanked B. Dalton for his time and transitioned the committee to the following agenda item.

**Outcome:**
Information only.



6

**Follow-up Action:**
None required.

**3.b. Housing UDO Analysis Update**
*Summary of Issue and Discussion:*
Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development

Janine Rustad opened the presentation by announcing that the city had officially launched the Housing Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Analysis project. She reported that the city had retained Multi-Studio as the lead consultant and partnered with subconsultant AYRES to conduct a comprehensive audit of the city's development code. She described the consulting team as dynamic and interdisciplinary, comprising planners, attorneys, landscape architects, architects, and engineers.

J. Rustad stated that the project began with a kickoff meeting the previous Friday and that consultants had already started the code audit phase. The objective of the audit is to identify areas where zoning and development standards can be adjusted to promote increased development of small lot housing and thereby improve housing attainability. She explained that the forthcoming project schedule was being refined and would be shared with the committee at a future meeting.

The project will involve significant stakeholder engagement, including internal city departments, developers, and members of the public. Each group will hold listening sessions, and education sessions will be organized to help residents understand the potential benefits of well-designed density. J. Rustad emphasized the importance of transparency and public input throughout the process.

She reported that the consulting team would develop topic papers for the analysis. These will address housing cost drivers, including financing and transportation; the relationship between mobility infrastructure and neighborhood livability; and future demographic forecasts to ensure that planning efforts meet current and long-term needs. The team will also review citywide and state policies that affect housing affordability.

J. Rustad noted that the analysis would examine limitations on small lot housing and broader regulatory factors such as parking minimums and design requirements. She questioned whether one-car garages are sufficient and whether prescriptive material requirements, such as brick façade percentages, effectively achieve the city's durability and quality design goals.

She indicated a more detailed project schedule, including stakeholder engagement timelines, would be shared with the committee in the coming month. The Development Review Advisory Board (DRAB) will also be a key resource. She concluded her remarks by inviting questions from the committee.

- Chair Bergan thanked J. Rustad and commended the department's collaborative approach. She asked whether the code audit would include a review of the city's zoning structure, which she described as confusing and overly fragmented.
- J. Rustad confirmed that zoning reform was part of the scope of work. She stated the audit would identify barriers and roadblocks related to zoning complexity and clarify distinctions between zoning districts. She acknowledged that prior council-approved process updates had addressed some issues related to zoning subareas and added that the city would explore additional simplification strategies going forward.
- Chair Bergan affirmed that clearer zoning designations would benefit both developers and residents. She reiterated the importance of ensuring that zoning regulations are easy to understand and apply. She asked if the committee had any additional questions. No further questions were raised.

**Outcome:**
Information only.

**Follow-up Action:**
None required.

**3.C. Ordinance Modifying the UDO Pertaining to a Setback Around Plugged Oil and Gas Wells**

*Summary of Issue and Discussion:*
Jeffrey S. Moore, Manager Energy and Environment Division

Jeffrey Moore opened the presentation by introducing himself and stating that the purpose of the discussion was to present a proposed ordinance to amend Chapter 135 of the City Code and add Section 146-4.2.3(k) to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The ordinance pertains to the regulation of setbacks around plugged oil and gas wells within the City of Aurora.

J. Moore explained that Aurora currently has 68 plugged wells, which is expected to grow substantially in the coming decades as active wells reach the end of their production life. Roughly half of the city's current plugged wells have been replugged since 2020. The replugging process is essential to prevent leaks, protect underground aquifers, which are critical to Aurora's water supply, and comply with state regulations that require replugging in specific proximity scenarios.

He clarified that these regulations would apply to surface owners and future developers, not to oil and gas operators. Over the past year, the city has worked closely with the development community to reach a consensus on regulations allowing space for replugging operations while minimizing disruption to property owners.



8

J. Moore outlined a proposed three-pronged regulatory framework. The first component is the setback area, requiring a 150-foot by 150-foot (22,500 square feet) buffer surrounding each plugged well where no structures may be built. Utilities would be prohibited within 25 feet, buildings within 50 feet, and residential structures within 100 feet. However, this space could still be used for parks, open space, or parking, as long as such uses conform to the city's PROS manual.

The second component is the establishment of a permanent, limited easement granted to city staff to allow for annual, non-invasive soil testing. These easements would be similar in function to avigation easements and would apply only to the land's surface, ensuring environmental monitoring without interfering with development.

The third and final component is the replugging authorization process. Only licensed operators with valid state permits and a surface use agreement with the property owner can replug wells. This condition was added to ensure that property owners retain control over activity on their land while maintaining alignment with state regulatory standards.

J. Moore reviewed the key changes made during the collaborative development process. The setback area was initially proposed at 200 by 200 feet, but has been reduced to 150 by 150 feet. The easement scope was narrowed to limit access exclusively to city staff for monitoring purposes. He also described changes that shifted decision-making authority from the city to a shared structure involving the city, landowners, and the state. Utility setback standards were modified to provide greater flexibility, and the process for locating and surveying plugged wells was refined.

He provided visual examples from the Medsker well at park in Southshore, demonstrating how setback areas would appear on-site and how the space could be integrated into a development without significant land loss. He noted that such space could support passive uses like green space or parking in urban areas.

J. Moore addressed several clarifying questions developers had submitted after the finalized agenda item. These included eliminating reference to a 175-foot by 175-foot option in the draft ordinance and allowing for irregular shapes as long as the area totals 22,500 square feet. He also explained how the Planning Director would evaluate variance requests using criteria drawn from the city’s Oil and Gas Manual. He reiterated that such decisions could be appealed to the City Council. Additional revisions include extending the 100-foot residential setback to apply to schools and hospitals and clarifying that overlapping setback areas are permissible for well sites with multiple plugged wells.

He concluded by stating that any measurable presence of methane would be considered a leak requiring remediation, and that the city was committed to working with the state’s orphan well program if needed. He outlined the ordinance’s next steps, including a presentation to the Joint Task Force, Planning and Zoning Commission, and ultimately, the City Council. He emphasized the ordinance's



9

importance in preparing Aurora for future replugging needs and ensuring long-term land use compatibility.

- Chair Bergan thanked J. Moore for his presentation and opened the floor for questions.
- CM Gardner began by asking for clarification regarding the spatial requirements on one of the slides. He noted that if a residential setback of 100 feet in all directions is required, the affected area would exceed the 150 by 150-foot standard setback and asked whether this larger area would become mandatory.
- J. Moore responded that while the 150-foot by 150-foot setback defines the formal area around the well, a separate 100-foot radius applies specifically to residential structures, schools, and hospitals. He explained that these separate distances are in place to meet state safety regulations, particularly those requiring a safe fall radius of tall drilling rigs. He said developers can design site layouts around these constraints, and the city works with them early to flag affected parcels and review development plans accordingly.
- J. Rustad added clarification, explaining that the 150-foot by 150-foot area is intended for staging and access during replugging activities, while the 100-foot radius serves as a safety buffer. She stated that the dual distances help distinguish between operational and safety needs.
- CM Gardner acknowledged the explanation and said he wanted to ensure the regulations did not unnecessarily reduce developable land. He noted that many of the wells subject to these regulations would be replugged far in the future and urged the city to consider the long-term impact on tax-generating development, particularly in northeast Aurora. He appreciated the tiered approach that distinguishes between residential and commercial structures. He then asked how Aurora’s approach compares with those of other jurisdictions.
- J. Moore responded with a summary of comparable regulations. Garfield County, on the Western Slope, uses a 25-foot radius. Adams County and Broomfield use 50-by-100-foot setbacks. Weld County uses a 50-foot radius, while Arapahoe County recently adopted a much larger 4.5-acre requirement. He stated that Aurora’s proposed standard of approximately half an acre positions the city in the middle of the spectrum, balancing safety with developability.
- CM Gardner expressed concern that Aurora’s setback exceeds those in jurisdictions known for strict oil and gas regulations, such as Broomfield. He reiterated his support for public safety but urged caution in placing unnecessary limitations on land use, particularly when the probability of re-accessing newly plugged wells remains low. He closed by again expressing appreciation for the staff’s collaboration with the development community and efforts to make the policy practical.
- J. Moore acknowledged the concern and cited a recent example from Aurora in which a well drilled initially in the 1980s was plugged, replugged in 2020, and then required replugging again in the current year. He emphasized that while re-entry is rare, it is not hypothetical. He presented commercial

development examples, such as Denali Logistics and the Sun Empire area, where developers successfully integrated plugged wells into site designs by building parking lots around them. He noted that there was no loss of developable land in those instances.

- CM Gardner agreed and reiterated his earlier point that while the likelihood of re-entry may be low, it should not be dismissed. He again thanked staff for their diligence and stakeholder engagement.
- Chair Bergan asked CM Jurinsky if she had any additional questions.
- CM Jurinsky said she had no questions and thanked J. Moore for the presentation.
- Chair Bergan also appreciated J. Moore's work with the development community. She noted that the initial proposal had raised concerns and was glad to see that the Joint Task Force (JTF) had addressed those concerns through collaboration and further review. She asked whether the annual inspections required by the ordinance would increase the city's workload.
- J. Moore responded that the city already conducts non-invasive inspections of well sites using handheld meters to detect hydrocarbon levels. These inspections are part of the city's existing workflow and would not require additional staffing or operational changes. He clarified that the state only conducts inspections if a known issue is reported, but the city can coordinate with state agencies if any concerns arise from local monitoring.
- Chair Bergan thanked J. Moore for the clarification and commended the thoughtful and forward-looking nature of the ordinance. She then asked committee members whether they supported moving the item forward.
- CM Gardner and Chair Bergan both voiced their approval. CM Jurinsky also confirmed her support.

**Outcome:**
Council Members approved this item to move forward.

**Follow-up Action:**
Staff will add this item to the June 11, 2025, Planning & Zoning Commission meeting agenda.

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## 4. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 4. a. Aurora Economic Development Council

- Yuri Gorlov

Yuri Gorlov provided an update on recent activity from the Aurora Economic Development Council (AEDC). He reported that 2025 had begun with strong economic development momentum, with the AEDC's project pipeline as full as it had been in recent years. Several business deals had already closed, each expected to bring approximately 300 to 400 jobs to Aurora, with a few more in progress that could yield similar employment gains. He noted that many companies remain cautious about timing and capital investment decisions despite this positive movement.

He explained that the state's prospective pipeline is currently 80 percent composed of manufacturing and energy-related companies, which he described as an unprecedented trend likely influenced by national economic policy shifts and federal-level incentives. However, he noted that workforce challenges—particularly the skills gap in the manufacturing sector—remain a concern and emphasized the need for local education partners to support talent development.

Y. Gorlov stated that Colorado's business environment has become more challenging recently. Rankings related to business climate, wage levels, population growth, and housing affordability had declined, moving Colorado from a top-five to a mid-tier state in many national assessments. Despite this, he acknowledged some bright spots, including Aurora's designation as one of the top 100 places to live and its national Defense Community of the Year recognition. He thanked the Aurora Chamber of Commerce for achieving that honor.

He also offered insight into current real estate trends. Industrial vacancy rates have risen to 12 percent following significant speculative development that outpaced absorption, while office vacancy and lease rates have remained stable. He stated that the AEDC continues to monitor these trends, particularly as companies re-evaluate office space needs in light of ongoing remote work patterns.

In terms of forward-looking projects, he reported that three new business parks, primarily located in Arapahoe County, were in the planning or funding stages. These efforts signal continued confidence in the region's long-term development potential, even though the entitlement process for such projects remains lengthy.

Y. Gorlov also discussed the AEDC's involvement in the upcoming redesignation of enterprise zones, which occurs every ten years. He described enterprise zones as critical economic tools for attracting investment to lower-income areas. He stated that AEDC had worked closely with Arapahoe and Adams counties, and the state to maximize Aurora's inclusion. He noted that while residential neighborhoods sometimes qualify based on census data, the AEDC aims to prioritize commercial areas better suited for capital investment. He explained that the new boundaries would take effect on January 1, 2026, and that some existing businesses may qualify for grandfathered eligibility if located near previous zone boundaries.

He updated AEDC's engagement with Xcel Energy and the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) regarding energy reliability, affordability, and transmission issues. AEDC has convened local stakeholders to participate in PUC proceedings, providing Aurora's business community a voice in regulatory discussions.



12

He summarized AEDC's recent federal advocacy work, including a trip to Washington, D.C., where the team met with Colorado's congressional delegation members to advocate for industries relevant to Aurora's economy. He stated that while some legislation on data centers and AI had failed to pass, the state's designation as a quantum hub remained a promising development. AEDC continues to engage companies to ensure they know the state's support, even without specific incentives.

In closing, Y. Gorlov acknowledged that the current week was Economic Development Week, as recognized by the International Economic Development Council. He shared that AEDC would promote its efforts on social media and encouraged council members to share any stories or updates they would like highlighted.

Chair Bergan thanked Y. Gorlov for the presentation and acknowledged Colorado's increasingly complex business environment, especially regarding energy policy and state-level regulation. She expressed appreciation for AEDC's ongoing efforts and advocacy.

**4.b. Havana Business Improvement District**

- Chance Horiuchi

NO REPORT

**4.c. Aurora Chamber of Commerce**

- Naomi Colwell

Naomi Colwell provided a brief follow-up to earlier remarks, highlighting recent recognition received by the Buckley Regional Military Affairs Committee—formerly the Defense Council. She shared that the city received an award from the Association of Defense Communities, an international organization that recognizes excellence in military community support. The award was granted to acknowledge the city's efforts in supporting Buckley Space Force Base and the broader military community.

She emphasized that the recognition was a collective achievement, made possible by the collaboration of city departments and stakeholders, and encouraged everyone to take pride in the accomplishment. She added that the associated logo and award materials would be shared with the city and suggested publicizing the recognition.

N. Colwell agreed with the idea of featuring the award on Aurora TV and noted that she would contact them.

**4.d. Planning Commission**

- Becky Hogan


13

B. Hogan provided a brief update on behalf of the Planning Commission. She reported that the Commission's annual workshop with planning staff is upcoming, offering in-person collaboration and communication opportunities. Additionally, she stated that the Commission is anticipating the appointment of a new planning commissioner by the City Council, which will bring the body back to full membership.

**4.e. Oil and Gas Committee**

- Brad Pierce

NO REPORT

**4.f. Business Advisory Board**

- Sarah Woodson

Sarah Woodson provided an announcement on behalf of the Business Advisory Board (BAB). She stated that the board will host its first crime-focused forum of the year on June 6, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Element Hotel on Tower Road. This event will shift focus from financial crimes to property crimes, specifically those affecting the hospitality and industrial manufacturing sectors. Commander Pendleton will present data on motor vehicle theft and property crime trends.

S. Woodson noted that the forum is intended to strengthen relationships between business owners and the city. She added that refreshments would be provided and that two council members from the committee would assist with marketing and outreach efforts. Visit Aurora will help distribute invitations to local hotel owners. She encouraged members to share the event information with any relevant business contacts and offered to provide additional details in coordination with G. Walls and C. Horiuchi.

In response to Chair Bergan's question, S. Woodson confirmed that she owns multiple businesses in the cannabis industry. She also clarified that event details will be posted on social media and other platforms, and outreach coordination will be finalized in the coming days.

**4.g. Retail**

- Bob Oliva

NO REPORT

**4.h. Small Business**

- Ashvina Patel



14

NO REPORT

**4.i. Visit Aurora**

- Bruce Dalton

NO REPORT

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**5. CONFIRM NEXT MEETING DATE**

Scheduled for June 11, 2025, at 8:30 AM MT.

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**6. ADJOURNMENT**

APPROVED: ___________________________________________
Francoise Bergan, Committee Chair

# CITY OF AURORA
## Council Agenda Commentary

| | |
|---|---|
| **Item Title:** Housing UDO Analysis Update | |
| **Item Initiator:** Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development | |
| **Staff Source/Legal Source:** Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development/Lena McClelland, Assistant City Attorney | |
| **Outside Speaker:** N/A | |
| **Strategic Outcome:** Economically Strong: Building a conducive development climate, a diverse mix of industries and housing options, and fostering economic growth so that our community thrives and remains resilient. | |

**COUNCIL MEETING DATES:**

**Study Session:** N/A

**Regular Meeting:** N/A

**2nd Regular Meeting (if applicable):** N/A

**Item requires a Public Hearing:** ☐ Yes ☒ No

**ITEM DETAILS** *(Click in highlighted area below bullet point list to enter applicable information.)*

- Waiver of reconsideration requested, and if so, why
- Sponsor name
- Staff source name and title / Legal source name and title
- Outside speaker name and organization
- Estimated time: (For Study Session items only indicate combined time needed for presentation and discussion)

Housing UDO (Code) Analysis Update
Sponsor name: Francois Bergan
Staff Source/Legal Source: Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development/Lena McClelland, Assistant City Attorney
Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 10/5

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**ACTIONS(S) PROPOSED** *(Check all appropriate actions)*

☐ Approve Item and Move Forward to Study Session

☐ Approve Item as Proposed at Policy Committee

☐ Approve Item and Move Forward to Regular Meeting

☐ Approve Item as Proposed at Study Session

☒ Information Only

☐ Approve Item as Proposed at Regular Meeting

☐ Approve Item with Waiver of Reconsideration
*Reason for waiver is described in the Item Details field above.*

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**PREVIOUS ACTIONS OR REVIEWS:**

**Policy Committee Name:** Planning & Economic Development

**Policy Committee Date:** 5/14/2025

**Action Taken/Follow-up:** ***(Check all that apply)***

☐ Recommends Approval

☐ Does Not Recommend Approval

☐ Forwarded Without Recommendation

☐ Minutes Not Available

☐ Minutes Attached

## HISTORY

*(Dates reviewed by City council, Policy Committees, Boards and Commissions, or Staff. Summarize pertinent comments. ATTACH MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS, POLICY COMMITTEES AND BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.)*

The UDO was adopted in 2019. With that update, changes were made to accommodate a broader array of housing types. Since then, housing shortages and increased costs of building homes have put pressure on the city to look to more creative ways to foster housing development while maintaining high-quality neighborhoods.

PED approved moving forward with a Housing Code Analysis at its May 8, 2024 meeting; updates have been presented to PED on a monthly basis.

## ITEM SUMMARY

*(Brief description of item, discussion, key points, recommendations, etc.)*

Multistudio is under contract, a kick off meeting was held on May 9, 2025 and the code audit is underway. The consultant, in partnership with staff, is working on refining the engagement schedule.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Select all that apply. (If no fiscal impact, click that box and skip to "Questions for Council")

☐ Revenue Impact ☐ Budgeted Expenditure Impact ☐ Non-Budgeted Expenditure Impact
☒ Workload Impact ☐ No Fiscal Impact

### REVENUE IMPACT

*Provide the revenue impact or N/A if no impact. (What is the estimated impact on revenue? What funds would be impacted? Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

None.

### BUDGETED EXPENDITURE IMPACT

*Provide the budgeted expenditure impact or N/A if no impact. (List Org/Account # and fund. What is the amount of budget to be used? Does this shift existing budget away from existing programs/services? Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

Contract amount of $149,790 is within budget.

### NON-BUDGETED EXPENDITURE IMPACT

*Provide the non-budgeted expenditure impact or N/A if no impact. (Provide information on non-budgeted costs. Include Personal Services, Supplies and Services, Interfund Charges, and Capital needs. Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

None.

### WORKLOAD IMPACT

*Provide the workload impact or N/A if no impact. (Will more staff be needed or is the change absorbable? If new FTE(s) are needed, provide numbers and types of positions, and a duty summary. Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

None.

## QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL

Item is to present the monthly update on the Housing Code Audit.

## LEGAL COMMENTS

The city manager shall be responsible to the council for the proper administration of all affairs of the city placed in his charge, and to that end he shall have the power and duty to inform the public concerning plans and activities of the council and city administration. (City Charter Section 7-4(j)) (McClelland)

# CITY OF AURORA
## Council Agenda Commentary

| | |
|---|---|
| **Item Title:** Summary of Land Use Legislation that Passed | |
| **Item Initiator:** Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning and Business Development | |
| **Staff Source/Legal Source:** Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development/Lena McClelland, Assistant City Attorney | |
| **Outside Speaker:** N/A | |
| **Strategic Outcome:** Economically Strong: Building a conducive development climate, a diverse mix of industries and housing options, and fostering economic growth so that our community thrives and remains resilient. | |

**COUNCIL MEETING DATES:**

**Study Session:** N/A

**Regular Meeting:** N/A

**2nd Regular Meeting (if applicable):** N/A

**Item requires a Public Hearing:** ☐ Yes ☒ No

**ITEM DETAILS** *(Click in highlighted area below bullet point list to enter applicable information.)*

- Waiver of reconsideration requested, and if so, why
- Sponsor name
- Staff source name and title / Legal source name and title
- Outside speaker name and organization
- Estimated time: (For Study Session items only indicate combined time needed for presentation and discussion)

- Summary of Land Use Legislation that Passed
- Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning & Business Development/Lena McLelland, Assistant City Attorney
- Estimated Time: 10/5

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**ACTIONS(S) PROPOSED** *(Check all appropriate actions)*

☐ Approve Item and Move Forward to Study Session

☐ Approve Item as Proposed at Policy Committee

☐ Approve Item and Move Forward to Regular Meeting

☐ Approve Item as Proposed at Study Session

☒ Information Only

☐ Approve Item as Proposed at Regular Meeting

☐ Approve Item with Waiver of Reconsideration
*Reason for waiver is described in the Item Details field above.*

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**PREVIOUS ACTIONS OR REVIEWS:**

**Policy Committee Name:** N/A

**Policy Committee Date:** N/A

**Action Taken/Follow-up:** ***(Check all that apply)***

☐ Recommends Approval

☐ Does Not Recommend Approval

☐ Forwarded Without Recommendation

☐ Minutes Not Available

☐ Minutes Attached

**HISTORY** *(Dates reviewed by City council, Policy Committees, Boards and Commissions, or Staff. Summarize pertinent comments. ATTACH MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS, POLICY COMMITTEES AND BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.)*

At the April PED meeting, staff presented a summary of proposed legislation. With the end of the state legislative session, several bills passed that will necessitate amendments to the UDO, as well as future reporting requirements.

**ITEM SUMMARY** *(Brief description of item, discussion, key points, recommendations, etc.)*

Staff will present a summary of state legislation that will impact the UDO (see attached list).

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Select all that apply. (If no fiscal impact, click that box and skip to "Questions for Council")

☐ Revenue Impact ☐ Budgeted Expenditure Impact ☐ Non-Budgeted Expenditure Impact
☒ Workload Impact ☐ No Fiscal Impact

**REVENUE IMPACT**
*Provide the revenue impact or N/A if no impact. (What is the estimated impact on revenue? What funds would be impacted? Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

N/A

**BUDGETED EXPENDITURE IMPACT**
*Provide the budgeted expenditure impact or N/A if no impact. (List Org/Account # and fund. What is the amount of budget to be used? Does this shift existing budget away from existing programs/services? Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

N/A

**NON-BUDGETED EXPENDITURE IMPACT**
*Provide the non-budgeted expenditure impact or N/A if no impact. (Provide information on non-budgeted costs. Include Personal Services, Supplies and Services, Interfund Charges, and Capital needs. Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

N/A

**WORKLOAD IMPACT**
*Provide the workload impact or N/A if no impact. (Will more staff be needed or is the change absorbable? If new FTE(s) are needed, provide numbers and types of positions, and a duty summary. Provide additional detail as necessary.)*

N/A

**QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL**

Information only.

**LEGAL COMMENTS**

The city manager shall be responsible to the council for the proper administration of all affairs of the city placed in his charge, and to that end he shall have the power and duty to inform the public concerning plans and activities of the council and city administration. (City Charter Section 7-4(j)) (McClelland)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jeannine Rustad, Director of Planning and Business Development
FROM: Lena McClelland, Assistant City Attorney
THROUGH: Rachel Allen, Deputy City Attorney
DATE: June 5, 2025
RE: 2025 Legislative Session Summary

*Summary.*

The 2025 Regular Legislative Session of the Colorado General Assembly ended on May 7, 2025. More than 700 bills were introduced. The following sections discuss bills that relate to housing and land use that were considered by the General Assembly.

*House Bill 25-1029: Municipal Authority over Certain Land*

Provides that a city has full police power over land outside of its municipal limits for parks, open space, natural areas, parkways, boulevards, or roads. If the City of Aurora has any applicable lands, the City will have the authority to exercise its police power over that land regardless of whether the area is open or closed to the public.

**Effective date:** This Act includes a safety clause and thus took effect March 26, 2025.

*House Bill 25-1030: Accessibility Standards in Building Codes*

Requires local governments to ensure that any substantial amendments to or adoptions of a building code meet or exceed the standards in one of the two most recent versions of the International Building Code (IBC), but cannot be less than what is required under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. This Act is not applicable to one- and two-family dwellings and townhomes in compliance with the International Residential Code (IRC) or a code equivalent to the IRC's accessibility standards. The City of Aurora has adopted the 2021 IBC, which is updated every three years, and will need to adopt accessibility standards in line with the 2024 or 2027 version if it makes any substantial changes to the building code after the 2027 version's publication.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025

*House Bill 25-1056: Local Government Permitting Wireless Telecommunications Facilities*

Provides that a telecommunication provider's completed application to site and construct or substantially change a new wireless service facility is approved if a local government does not make a decision on the application within ninety days. The ninety-day decision period may be tolled one time for a period of up to forty-five days if the local government determines that it does not have the capacity to review the application and other pending applications. However, the pending applications must be related to affordable or attainable housing, renewable energy, government projects, or other projects, if a law establishes a timeline for review. If a local government chooses to exercise this tolling authority, it must notify the telecommunications applicant in writing within thirty days of the tolling with reasoning for the determination. This bill was sent to the Governor on May 15.

**Effective date:** January 1, 2026

*House Bill 25-1060: Electronic Fence Detection Systems*

Permits local governments to impose installation or operational requirements for electronic fence detection systems on non-residential properties and require a permit for such systems as part of any generally required permit for other alarm systems. A local government may also impose requirements for or prohibit the installation or operation of an electronic fence detection system in non-residential properties within a residential area.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025

*House Bill 25-1093: Limitations on Local Anti-Growth Land Use Policies*

Expands the existing prohibition on "anti-growth laws" to generally applicable land use laws in Census-designated urban areas that expressly decrease permitted residential density or residential uses of land after July 1, 2025, without a corresponding increase of residential density or residential uses elsewhere in the jurisdiction.

This will prohibit the City of Aurora from decreasing residential density or residential uses of land below July 1, 2025, levels without increasing density or uses elsewhere in the City.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025.

*House Bill 25-1096: Automated Permits for Clean Energy Technology*

Clarifies that any grant funding received under the streamlined solar permitting and inspection grant program can be used for up to three years after the implementation of the automated permitting and inspection software. Previously the law was not clear as to when the three-year use period began.

Previous versions of the bill would have required the City of Aurora to implement an automatic residential permitting platform, but this language was removed.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025

*House Bill 25-1113: Limit Turf in New Residential Development*

Expands a 2024 bill that prohibits local entities from installing or allowing others to install nonfunctional turf, nonfunctional artificial turf, or invasive plant species in new development or redevelopment projects to include multifamily residential housing that includes more than twelve dwelling units. The 2024 legislation will take effect January 1, 2026.

"Functional" artificial turf will still be allowed under this Act. This term is defined in the Act and generally includes artificial turf that is used in recreation areas or civil infrastructure projects.

This legislation will require the City of Aurora to amend the Aurora City Code **by January 1, 2028**, in accordance with this Act.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025

*House Bill 25-1169: Housing Developments on Faith and Educational Land*

This bill, colloquially referred to as "YIGBY" ("Yes in God's Backyard"), would have allowed specified real property owned by faith-based organizations, school districts, and state colleges and universities to bypass zoning requirements for local governments with a population greater than 2,000 as of the 2020 Census.

This bill passed the House of Representatives but died in the Senate.

*House Bill 25-1198: Regional Planning Roundtable Commission*

If sufficient funding is received, this Act creates a regional planning commission in the state Department of Local affairs that would meet when a local government requests assistance in addressing a regional opportunity or challenge.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025

*House Bill 25-1272: Construction Defects & Middle Market Housing*

Creates the multifamily construction incentive program for multifamily, attached housing of two or more units starting January 1, 2026. This is a voluntary program for builders that limits actions to defects claims and specifies a claimant's duties when bringing a defect claim.

This Act further requires local governments to establish a fast-track approval process for applications for for-sale, multifamily condominium projects to qualify for assistance from the state affordable housing fund.

**Effective date:** August 6, 2025

*House Bill 25-1273: Residential Building Stair Modernization*

Requires municipalities with a population of 100,000 or more that is served by a fire protection district, fire authority, or fire department that is or was accredited by a specified organization to adopt or amend their building code to allow up to five stories of a multifamily residential building to be served by a single exit.

Because the City of Aurora has adopted the 2021 IBC, which requires most new multifamily buildings to have two stairways, it would likely need to change amend its building code in order to be in compliance **by December 1, 2027**. It is unclear whether this would be considered a significant change to the building code as contemplated in HB25-1030, discussed above, which will require that the City of Aurora adopt one of the two most-recent versions of the IBC's accessibility standard.

**Effective date:** This Act includes a safety clause and thus took effect May 13, 2025.

*Senate Bill 25-002: Regional Building Codes for Factory-Built Structures*

Creates an advisory committee on factory-built structures and tiny homes that will develop regional building codes that will supersede other building code requirements. Once these codes are adopted, the state plumbing board, state electrical board, and state fire suppression will not have jurisdiction over these structures.

This will further limit the City of Aurora from enacting regulations that have the effect of excluding factory-built structures that are subject to the advisory committee's building codes.

**Effective date:** This Act includes a safety clause and thus took effect May 8, 2025.

*Senate Bill 25-149: Local Government Duties Equestrian Protections*

Permits counties and municipalities to construct equestrian road crossings or horse-trailer parking and/or require developers to construct these structures. This is a voluntary action that the City of Aurora may choose to take. If it opts to take these steps, there are requirements for signage and permission may need to be sought from the Dept. of Transportation if a crossing is on a state highway or a right-of-way for a state highway.

**Effective Date:** August 6, 2025

If this memorandum raises any additional questions, please let me know.

Cc: Brandon Cammarata, Manager of Planning