



# City of Aurora, Colorado

Invites Qualified Candidates to Apply for

## CITY MANAGER

**ABOUT AURORA** – Aurora, Colorado, part of the Aurora/Denver metropolitan area, is a city of 314,000 residents and is the third largest city in Colorado. Strategically located near the Denver International Airport, Aurora is home to many bioscience, aerospace, healthcare, and high technology employers including the Raytheon Company, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, and Boeing.

During the last several decades, Aurora has evolved from a bedroom suburb cast in the shadow of Denver into its own dynamic urban center that is the second largest community in the 3.5 million population metropolitan area. With an emphasis on smart growth, infill development, sustainability, and livable neighborhoods, Aurora’s population has grown by 1.5 percent annually over the last 18 years. Only slightly more than half of Aurora’s 154 square miles is currently developed so there is ample opportunity for Aurora to continue to grow.

### HISTORY

Incorporated in 1891, Aurora was originally named Fletcher by its founder, former Chicago resident Donald Fletcher. In 1907, the community changed its name to Aurora. Agriculture was the main industry in Aurora’s early years.

In 1921 while Aurora still had less than 2,000 residents, the U.S. government selected Aurora as the site for Fitzsimons Army Hospital to treat the wounded—especially those affected by mustard gas and tuberculosis—during World War I. In 1938, the Lowry Air Force Base located partly in Aurora was built. In 1942, the Army Air Corps built Buckley Field, now named the Buckley Air Force Base. These bases enhanced Aurora’s military presence and helped to spur Aurora’s growth to a community of 50,000 residents by 1960.

Fueled by interstate highway construction and the desirable quality of life offered by the area, Aurora’s population increased more than five-fold to 276,000 by 2000. However, the 1990’s was not without its challenges as the Lowry Air Force Base and the Fitzsimons Army Hospital were closed by the federal government. The community responded to these challenges by converting Fitzsimons into a world-class medical campus and one of the largest bioscience parks in the country.

**Additional information about Aurora is available at [www.auroragov.org](http://www.auroragov.org)**

*The City of Aurora has won more than 100 awards in the last decade. Most noteworthy is that Aurora received the All-America City Award in 2008 for the Fitzsimons Campus development, an after-school program, and an immigrant integration project.*



*The City has received 7 ICMA awards in recent years for innovative programs in the areas of sustainability, community partnerships, public-private partnerships, citizen involvement, public safety, and services to the disadvantaged. Also, in 2009, Aurora was one of only 20 jurisdictions in the country to receive the ICMA Center for Performance Measurement Certificates of Achievement, Distinction, and Excellence for its performance management program. The City also was named the Top Digital City in America for cities of 250,000+ population in 2007 and 2008.*

*The City is rigorous in its pursuit of excellence and professionalism in the delivery of its services as demonstrated by the following City departments that have met national accreditation standards:*

- Police—accredited by Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies;*
- Public Works—accredited by American Public Works Association (1 of only 3 in Colorado);*
- Fire—accredited by Commission of Fire Accreditation International; and*
- Building—accredited by International Accreditation Service (only one in Colorado).*

## HOUSING

In the 1980's, the City established a vision of creating new employment centers with high-paying jobs along with housing options desired by these employees. As a result, many new housing developments with higher-end detached single-family and condominium units have been created. One of these developments, Southshore, was named the Community of the Year in 2007 by the Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Denver.



## FITZSIMONS CAMPUS

With the closing of the Fitzsimons Army Hospital by the federal government in 1995, Aurora partnered with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and the University of Colorado Medical School to create the Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority. The result has been the establishment of the Fitzsimons Campus that in combination with the adjacent Anschutz Medical Campus has created a 578-acre site with 15,000 employees dedicated to bioscience, healthcare, medical education, and advanced research. This is the largest bioscience development in Colorado and one of the largest in the country.

There are still 184 acres at the Fitzsimons Campus yet to be developed. When completed, the total public and private investment in the Fitzsimons Campus will be \$4.2 billion, and the Campus will be home to 30,000 employees. The Campus currently has two hospitals--University of Colorado Medical School and The Children's Hospital. In addition, a \$98 million Veteran's Administration Hospital is currently being constructed and is projected to open in 2013.

## LEISURE & CULTURE

Aurora's climate is mild and dry with more than 300 days of sunshine annually offering ample opportunity to participate in outside activities year-round. Residents and visitors to Aurora enjoy the scenic mile-high beauty of the eastern Colorado prairie with views of both Pike's Peak to the south and the Rocky Mountains to the west. The community has a multitude of recreational facilities including:

- Sports Park, a city-owned facility that has 23 full-sized soccer fields and 12 baseball/softball fields that host national and regional tournaments;
- Seven municipal golf courses ranging from traditional layouts to award-winning championship courses;
- More than 100 improved parks and over 50 miles of hiking and biking trails;
- Two indoor pools, five outdoor pools, and two City reservoirs that allow for swimming, fishing, and wind sailing;
- One full-service City recreation center, 3 community centers, and 3 neighborhood centers;
- A City skate park and dog park;
- The Morrison Nature Center situated on 200-acres of open space featuring classes and interactive exhibits; and
- The 1100-acre Plains Conservation Center featuring the flora and fauna of Colorado's eastern plains.



The community also has many cultural assets including the Aurora History Museum, Aurora Symphony Orchestra, Aurora Fox Arts Center, Aurora Singers, DeLaney Farm Historic District, and the East End Arts District.

## TRANSPORTATION

Aurora is served by an extensive transportation network consisting of freeways and toll-roads, light rail, and buses. There is both an inner loop freeway system comprised of Interstates 70 and 225 and an outer-loop system consisting of the E-470 toll-road.

The Regional Transportation District provides commuter and light rail and bus service for the metropolitan area. Aurora currently has 2 light rail stations. Ten additional light rail stations are proposed to be built in Aurora including a commuter rail transfer station that will connect light rail to a future commuter rail line whose destination is the Denver International Airport.

## NEIGHBORHOODS

Aurora has a diverse housing stock located in more than 450 neighborhoods, 382 of which are City-registered neighborhood associations. Tree-lined streets, open prairie, majestic views of the mountains, and many neighborhood parks make Aurora neighborhoods an ideal place to call home. Aurora's Neighborhood Services Department works in conjunction with neighborhood groups to maintain an attractive community appearance and enhance residents' quality of life.

## EDUCATION

Most of the community is served by 2 public school districts—Aurora Public Schools and the Cherry Creek School District. Aurora Public Schools has been making improvements to every school building due to a voter-approved \$225 million bond program. More than half of Aurora's students attend schools in the Cherry Creek District which is one of the top performing school districts in the country. There is also one other public school district that serves some Aurora students.

Aurora has the following 8 campuses of higher education: University of Colorado Medical School; Anthem College; Columbia College; Regis University; Platt College; Pickens Technical College; Concorde Career College; and Community College of Aurora.

## THE CITY GOVERNMENT –

### GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The City of Aurora has operated under the council-manager form of government since 1954. The City Council consists of a Mayor and 10 Council Members elected to 4-year overlapping terms. The Mayor and 4 Council Members are elected at-large, and the other 6 Council Members are elected by wards. Aurora is the 25th largest council-manager city in the country.

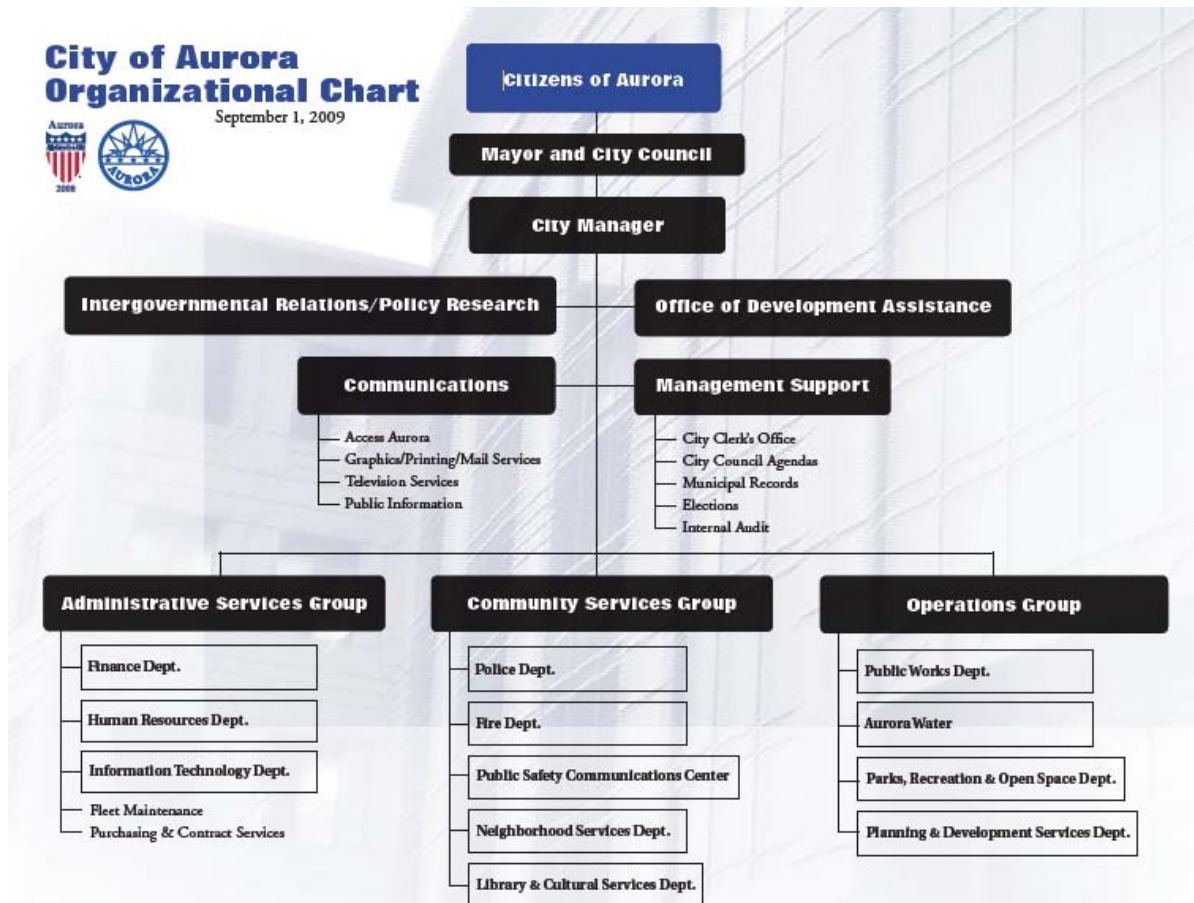
The City has a long history of its Mayors being actively involved in day-to-day representation of the City. In recognition of this, the Mayor's position was changed to full-time in 1993 by Aurora voters. The Mayor's duties which consist of chairing City Council meetings and voting to break ties on Council agenda items were not impacted as a result of the change to a full-time position.

The City Council appoints a Mayor Pro Tem annually for a one-year term. The Mayor Pro Tem serves as Mayor in his or her absence and also makes appointments to the 9 Council Committees that address various policy issues. Each Council Member chairs one Committee and serves on 3 Committees. Following is a list of the Council Committees: Community Partnership; Management and Finance; Neighborhood Services; Operations and Environmental Affairs; Planning, Economic Development and Redevelopment; Public and Intergovernmental Relations; Public Safety and Courts; Transportation and Airports; and Water.

The City Manager ensures that the policy direction set by the City Council is carried out and that City services are delivered equitably to all residents. The City Manager is responsible for recommending the budget to the City Council and for hiring and providing managerial leadership to City staff. The former City Manager recently retired after 13 years in the position. Including the former City Manager, the previous 2 City Managers served for a total of 20 years, both leaving voluntarily. The City is a full-service operation with 2,676 FTE's. The City conducts collective bargaining with both Police and Fire unions. In addition to the City Manager, the City Council appoints the City Attorney, Presiding Judge, and Court Administrator.



*Aurora Municipal Center completed in 2003 houses the City's administrative offices*



## FINANCIAL ISSUES

The City has an annual budget of \$615 million and a five-year Capital Improvement Program budget of \$710 million. The City is sales tax dependent with sales taxes comprising 54 percent of General Fund revenues. Other major General Fund revenue sources include property taxes, use taxes, franchise fees, and the state highway users tax. There are 4 self-supporting enterprise funds—Water, Wastewater, Golf, and Development Review. The City operates on a January-December fiscal year.

Like most local governments, Aurora has experienced financial challenges in recent years. Sales tax collections are projected to increase by only 1.5 percent in 2010, and salary schedules for 2010 were increased by 1-3 percent. Approximately 50 employee layoffs have occurred recently largely as the result of voter disapproval of a ballot measure in November 2009 to fund libraries through a General Improvement District.

The City has a rather unique voter-approved requirement to maintain staffing of at least 2 sworn Police personnel per 1,000 population. Population projections are updated annually to ensure compliance with this requirement.

Aurora is one of the founding members of the Colorado Performance Measurement Consortium, a group of thirteen communities affiliated with the ICMA Center for Performance Measurement. The City makes use of performance measures to assist in monitoring its effectiveness and efficiency. Two noteworthy measures are the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) fire insurance premiums Public Protection Classification rating of 2 and the City's bond ratings of Aa1 (general obligation) and Aa2 (water revenue).

**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES** – The following is a summary of the issues and opportunities to be managed by Aurora's next City Manager.

- *Financial Management*—financial projections indicate that the City will likely be under continued financial pressure for several years. Like many other local governments, the City has a “structural budget deficit.” The next City Manager is expected to lead a strategic review of alternatives to improve the City's financial condition including reorganization, productivity improvements, compensation policies, increasing the tax base through economic development, and new revenue opportunities.
- *Visioning*—the City Manager needs to be an active participant in visioning with all stakeholders to help Aurora implement its vision statement. The City has many opportunities to shape its future destiny such as attracting quality employment and housing development on infill and outlying land, annexation, and taking advantage of future light rail stations to encourage transit-oriented development. City officials correlate the successful implementation of its vision with enhancing its financial condition.
- *Water Resources*—in Aurora as in most western cities, the acquisition of sufficient water rights and careful management of water resources are essential to ensuring an adequate water supply for current and future residents and businesses. The \$750 million Prairie Waters project which has been under construction for the last five years will be completed by the end of 2010. This water reclamation project will increase Aurora's water supply by 20 percent. The City Manager will oversee the City's efforts to augment its water resource portfolio, consider additional water reclamation projects, and encourage water conservation.
- *Employee Relations*—the City has made a major commitment in recent years to foster a climate of positive, team-oriented employee relations. The Partnership of Aurora City Employees (PACE) is comprised of employee representatives from all departments and all levels of the organization that meets monthly with the City Manager to discuss current issues impacting the organization. In addition, the Labor-Management Committee consisting of city management and Police and Fire union representatives meets monthly to discuss non-bargaining matters. Finally, the City routinely recognizes exemplary employee contributions to the organization and community. City employees truly appreciate City management's efforts to initiate two-way communication. These efforts have improved employee loyalty and morale which is extremely valuable especially during these tough economic times. The next City Manager needs to continue this commitment to employee relations.

**AURORA'S VISION STATEMENT**  
***Aurora will be the best city in Colorado and an innovative leader in the region by:***  
• ***Creating great neighborhoods***  
• ***Emphasizing public safety and quality services***  
• ***Encouraging a high quality and high wage economic environment***  
• ***Supporting recreational, cultural, educational and community activities for our citizens***



## **JOB REQUIREMENTS –**

The minimum job requirements are: 1) Master's degree in public administration, business administration, or directly related field; and 2) at least 5 years progressively responsible administrative and managerial experience as a Deputy City Manager or City Manager in a medium to large full-service municipal government or comparable organization. An equivalent combination of experience, education, and training may be considered. The Mayor and City Council are open to considering applicants who do not have local government experience but have managed other types of large complex organizations.

### *Desired Professional and Personal Attributes*

The following are the desired professional and personal attributes for Aurora's next City Manager:

- Strong, assertive, collaborative leader who is able to build consensus among full-time Mayor, City Council, Council-appointed officials, City staff, and community;
- Visionary who partners with Mayor, Council, and City staff on policy initiatives especially in the areas of economic development and water resources;
- Creative, innovative, and "thinks outside the box";
- Good financial management skills and sense of fiscal discipline with ability to develop more efficient ways of delivering City services;
- Ability to work with a highly qualified, cohesive, professional management staff in an effective manner without micro-managing them;
- Excellent human relations skills with ability to relate to and communicate effectively with all stakeholders;
- Situational leadership style an asset in dealing with wide variety of stakeholders and issues;
- Demonstrated philosophy and track-record of valuing City employees and fostering a positive employee relations culture;
- Ability to develop productive working relationships with labor unions;
- Politically astute while maintaining a professional perspective;
- Experience in a rapidly growing community and dealing with growth management issues desired;
- Marketing savvy with ability to promote and enhance Aurora's image;
- Experience working with bioscience, aerospace, high tech, and healthcare industries a plus;
- Knowledge of water rights and water resource/reclamation issues a plus; and
- Experience with succession planning programs a plus.

### *Compensation*

The compensation for the City Manager job is highly competitive including a fringe benefit package with:

- a choice of excellent and comprehensive health, dental, vision, and life insurance plans;
- flexible spending accounts for health and dependent care expenses;
- choice of participation in City's defined benefit retirement plan with current employer and employee contributions of 5.5 percent each or participation in an executive money purchase plan with current employer and employee contributions of 10 percent each;
- a selection of deferred compensation plans (ICMA Retirement Corporation, Lincoln, and Nationwide);
- long-term disability insurance;
- an employee assistance program; and
- voluntary long-term care and universal life insurance programs.

The starting salary is dependent on the selected individual's qualifications and match with the desired attributes being sought by the City. The City will pay reasonable and customary moving expenses for the next City Manager who is required to live within the city limits.

### **To Apply:**

In order to be considered for this position, please send your resume and cover letter with current salary by **June 14, 2010** to [pwconsulting@cox.net](mailto:pwconsulting@cox.net). For additional information about this job, please contact:

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