



CITY OF AURORA, COLORADO



Director of Parks, Recreation & Open Space



THE CITY

Situated on prairie grasslands, rolling hills and the Black Forest's northern tip, Aurora offers something for every lifestyle, from convenient urban living to master-planned communities. Aurora is a close-knit community with excellent services and amenities. With Buckley Air Force Base, the Anschutz Medical Campus, Fitzsimons Innovation Community, and other major employment centers, the city has thriving aerospace, defense, bioscience, health care, and distribution industries. Aurora is also a global community. People from around the world live, work and have businesses throughout Aurora, creating a culturally rich environment and one of the city's greatest assets.

Long known as the Gateway to the Rockies, this All-American City lies on the eastern edge of the Denver-Aurora metropolitan area. The city boasts spectacular views of the Front Range spanning from Pikes Peak to Longs Peak. And, if you need to travel locally or abroad, Aurora's proximity to three major highways, light and commuter rail lines, and Denver International Airport makes it not only accessible, but a short commute to the world.

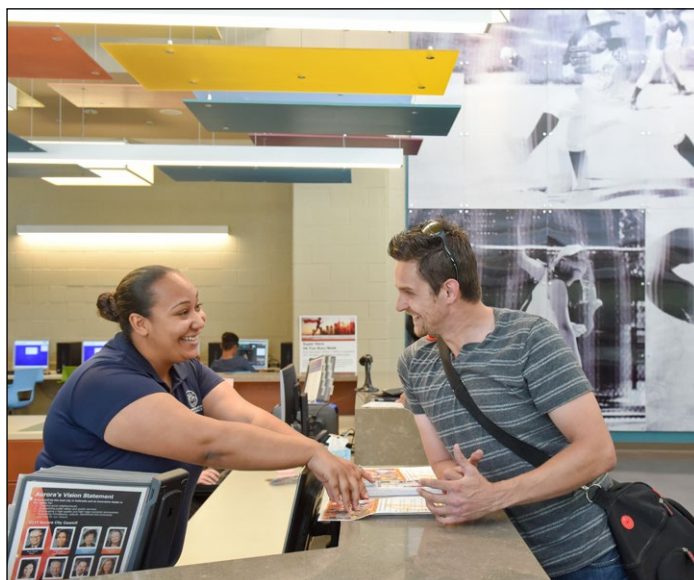
More than 399,913 residents and over 10,000 businesses choose to call Aurora home, making it the third largest city in Colorado and the 51st largest in the United States. The city covers 164 square miles and is located within three counties, Arapahoe, Adams, and Douglas, with 74 square miles of land inside city limits still undeveloped. Aurora's diversity as a majority-minority city, where no one ethnic group is the majority population, which is also reflected in the many ethnic and independent restaurants and thriving arts scene in the community.

Aurora provides access to quality education, with five school districts and nine campuses of higher learning meeting the instructional needs of residents and those beyond the city limits. Aurora is the only place in Colorado where students can get a Doctor of Medicine degree.

Aurora's climate is mild and dry, offering residents and visitors ample opportunity to get outside, stay fit, and enjoy all that Colorado living has to offer. Aurora has five golf courses, two reservoirs, more than 99 developed parks, and over 8,000 acres of natural areas open space and trails. Situated at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, Aurora is a gateway to all Colorado has to offer.

GOVERNANCE

The City of Aurora is a full-service city governed by a council/manager form of government, which combines the political leadership of elected officials with the managerial expertise of an appointed local government manager. The Aurora City Council is comprised of the mayor and 10 city council members. Of those 10 members, six members represent one of the six wards that section the city. The remaining four members are elected at-large, like the mayor, to represent the city. The city of Aurora has 30 boards, commissions, committees, and authorities composed of citizen volunteers appointed by the Aurora City Council. The City Manager is appointed by and reports to the mayor and City Council. The City is comprised of approximately 3,521 full-time employees and an FY25 adopted general fund budget of \$541,556,685.



THE ORGANIZATION

It is an exciting time to work for the City of Aurora, we're growing and looking for dedicated and collaborative individuals to join our team of talented and valued employees. Excellent organizations have a set of principles, or core values, that are used to implement their mission and vision. Those values represent the touchstone for the organization, guiding the decisions of the individuals and the organization. At the City of Aurora, we demonstrate our excellence by modeling the **CORE 4 Values** of: **Integrity, Respect, Professionalism,** and **Customer Service**, and we welcome all who share these values to apply.

WHY WORK FOR AURORA?

- ◆ Make a difference in the lives of real people every day.
- ◆ Diverse Community
- ◆ Competitive total compensation package
- ◆ Well-Funded General Employees Retirement Plan
- ◆ Light rail stations minutes away
- ◆ On-site fitness center and wellness programs
- ◆ Internal educational programs to assist with career advancement.
- ◆ Access to innovative workspaces and remote work opportunities

For further information, please visit the city's website at www.auroragov.org

DEPARTMENT & POSITION OVERVIEW

The mission of the Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Department is to encourage active lifestyles and create healthy environments for people, nature and community.

Under the general direction of the Deputy City Manager, the Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space manages a department responsible for planning, coordinating, administering and directing the operation of the City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department. This position requires comprehensive knowledge of principles, practices,

and operating requirements of a parks and open space system; recreation; urban and parks design concepts; capital improvement program administration; contract administration; building, facilities and grounds maintenance; municipal management, budgeting, long range planning, and regulatory requirements. The city is seeking a strong, solutions-oriented executive leader with an ability to motivate and connect with staff and successfully achieve organizational outcomes.

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) has five divisions: Recreation and Golf, Operations; Planning, Design & Construction; Marketing and Communications; and Business Services. The department has a \$59M operating budget and \$40M+ capital budget, along with over 300 full-time and 1,200+ part-time/seasonal staff.

PROS Offerings:

- ◆ 8,000 Acres of Open Space
- ◆ 101 Developed Parks
- ◆ 91+ Miles of Trails
- ◆ 5 Golf Courses
- ◆ 10 Pools, Splash grounds
- ◆ 3 Nature Centers
- ◆ 2 Reservoirs
- ◆ 6 Recreation Centers
- ◆ 180 Athletic Fields
- ◆ 66 shelters and 35 reservable park shelters
- ◆ 50,000 Trees





Key Responsibilities:

- ◆ Contributes to the accomplishment of the City's mission and goals by effectively and efficiently managing the parks, reservoirs, horticulture, forestry, golf, open space, facilities, building maintenance, parks/open space planning and development functions for the City.
- ◆ Establishes short and long-range departmental priorities, goals and objectives
- ◆ Establishes and guides short, mid, and long-range financial plans and strategies including preparation and effective management of department budget.
- ◆ Manages effective working relationships with the city's management team, employees, community members, and elected officials.
- ◆ Effectively coordinates the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department activities with other city departments to ensure a consistent approach towards common goals and the cost-effective delivery of services.
- ◆ Develops, recommends, implements and oversees the administration of Parks, Recreation and Open Space policies, guidelines, and procedures. Maintains up-to-date policies and practices that meet the organizational needs of the city, City Code, and applicable Federal and State laws.
- ◆ Effectively manages department employees including recruiting, hiring, onboarding, training, safety, performance management, discipline, termination and general supervision.
- ◆ Develops and negotiates contracts, intergovernmental agreements, and participates in negotiations for the acquisition of public parks and open space.
- ◆ Serves as liaison to boards, commissions, and citizens groups and represents the City in a variety of organizations

- ◆ Develops and maintains a culture of performance and engagement focused on customer service, communication, accountability, proactive planning, and results.
- ◆ Provides training in and promotion of accountability for safe work practices and working conditions for employees.
- ◆ Engages in and promotes ongoing research of best practices and technology to achieve department objectives efficiently and effectively.

For more information on the PROS Department, please visit:

https://www.auroragov.org/city_hall/departments/parks_recreation_open_space

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate shall have the executive presence, situational and public awareness, to build upon the successes of the Department. This strategic-minded individual must be dedicated to embracing the city's leadership guiding principles and leading the department in the same manner with a focus on customer service excellence. The new Director shall prioritize high performance and innovation, focusing on best practices to enhance organizational and operational efficiencies.

The ideal candidate shall be a mission-driven community steward to deliver services and projects in an innovative, quality, and timely manner. The new leader must have proven experience managing parks and open space system, recreation/sports programming and operations, capital improvement project administration, facilities and grounds maintenance, fee/membership structures, assessments and policies, as well as fiscal management, budgeting, and long-range planning.

The new Director will be an advocate and communicate the positive impact that parks, recreation programming and outdoor spaces has on the community, and have these additional core competencies:

- ◆ **Leadership & Communication:** Effectively leads, supervises, and coaches a large and diverse workforce; develops a positive and inclusive team culture and focused on strategic planning, staff development and engagement; listens attentively to understand the needs, intentions, and views of others; possesses strong interpersonal, analytical, written, and verbal communication and presentation skills.

- ◆ **Political Astuteness & Collaboration:** Has the professional presence to successfully engage with employees at all levels, department leadership, elected officials, the media, other governmental agencies, and the public; handles sensitive situations with tact and diplomacy; serves as a departmental representative for City Council meetings, community meetings and project meetings.
- ◆ **Adaptable & Managing Change:** Adapts to ongoing challenges and capable of shifting in various directions due to changes in department priorities or issues; provides updates to City leadership on an ongoing basis; demonstrates a commitment to building an agile workforce that responds and adapts quickly to a changing environment and demands; embraces change for the improvement and successful growth of the organization.
- ◆ **Strategic Thinking & Problem Solving:** Fosters and guides the vision and direction for department; sets priorities and goals that align with the organization; develops, implements, and monitors strategic/action plans and project schedules; ability to manage a fast-paced environment and ensuring division responsibilities are carried out effectively, efficiently, and timely.
- ◆ **Process Improvement & Benchmarking:** Seeks "best practices" in relevant industries and other public sector agencies for continued growth; identifies opportunities to achieve effective and efficient project/service delivery; assesses work performance and outcomes for ongoing process improvement, focuses on customer satisfaction and technological advancement; demonstrates the ability to propose and implement creative solutions for unique and complex scenarios

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ A Bachelor's Degree or higher in Parks Administration, Recreation Management, Business Administration, or a directly related field, is required.
- ◆ Eight (8) years of progressive experience and responsibility directly related to parks, recreation, and open space with an organization and community of similar size and/or service level.
- ◆ At least five (5) years supervisory/managerial experience in an organization of a similar size and/or service level.
- ◆ Public sector experience is imperative!

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ Master's Degree
- ◆ Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) credentials are a plus!

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is **\$166,653 – \$260,396**

The starting salary will be commensurate with the qualifications and experience of the selected candidate. ***This position is eligible for a flexible/hybrid work schedule, but candidates must reside in proximity to the Greater Aurora/Denver Metro Area.*** The City offers an attractive benefit package. To learn more, go to: <https://jobs.auroragov.org/benefits>

APPLICATION PROCESS

To be considered for this exceptional career opportunity, submit your resume, cover letter, and a list of six work-related references (who will not be contacted without prior notice) by **Friday, January 10, 2025**. Please submit your materials to: <https://www.cpshr.us/recruitment/2428>.

For additional information about this position please contact:



Kylie Wilson
Principal Consultant
kwilson@cpshr.us
Website: www.cpshr.us

Candidates deemed to have the most relevant and strongest backgrounds will be invited to participate in a preliminary screening interview with the consultant. Those individuals determined to be best suited will be invited to participate further in a formal assessment process with the City. An appointment is anticipated upon the completion of comprehensive reference and background checks.

