



OCTOBER 2023

# A Citizen's Guide to Aurora's Most Pressing Issues



At Common Sense Institute our focus is on jobs and the economy. We know with a more prosperous Colorado: individuals have more opportunity, families flourish, and communities thrive. CSI's goal is to provide research that is based on the facts. **No time is more important to understand the facts than ahead of elections as we look to choose our next slate of local leaders.**

To inform the upcoming elections in Aurora, CSI is issuing the latest facts on crime, homelessness and housing so that voters can have the latest information ahead of going to vote.

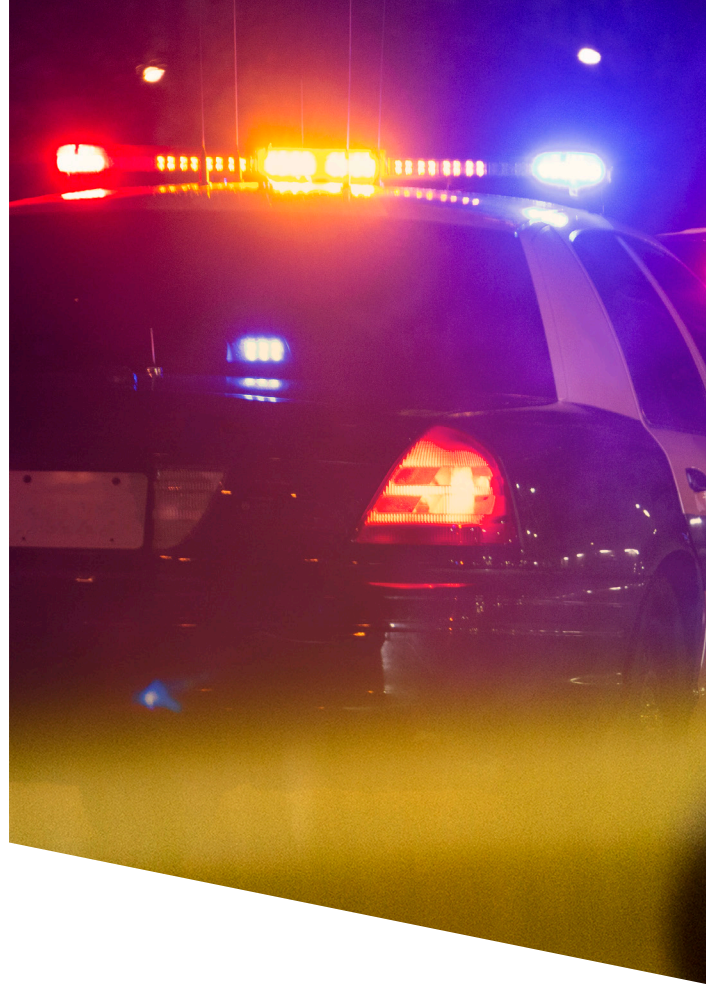
Please review the most pressing issues facing the residents of Aurora - [crime](#), [homelessness](#), and [housing](#). Check out the full reports on [CSI's website](#).



# Crime

This report analyzes the current state of Aurora crime and crime rates. Common Sense Institute (CSI) focused data from Colorado Crime Statistics and focused on statistics reported by the Aurora Police Department.

CSI aims to offset fear with facts. Media reports and anecdotal observations might not present the full picture. Actual crime data, especially compared to other jurisdictions and the entire state, clarifies reality. Statewide crime statistics combine both urban and rural areas, and because they are overarching, will often be lower than those of individual cities. Aurora's data shows a darker picture than other cities as its crime rate has been increasing. Policymakers and local leaders can affect change more effectively as they understand CSI data.



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## Aurora crime is up.

- **Aurora's crime rate rose 12.4% from 2008 to 2022.** The crimes against persons rate rose 46%. The crimes against property rate rose 17.7%.
- Aurora has a Crime Concentration of 151.6%, meaning **Aurora's crime is 51.6% more concentrated than Colorado's.** The likelihood of being a crime victim in Aurora is much higher.

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The number of **sworn officers on patrol has increased by 15.4%** since 2008 and there are 412.

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Aurora Police Department **response times have increased in all three patrol districts.** From 2012 to 2022, response times rose 45.2% in District 1, 57.3% in District 2, and 33.6% in District 3.

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**Following the July 2022 change to penalties for motor vehicle theft in Aurora, motor vehicle theft rates have declined 28.6%** from 630 per 100,000 residents to 450 per 100,000 in June 2023.

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## Police strength and performance are down.

- The **arrest rate by the Aurora Police Department has decreased by 49.6%** since 2008, while clearance rates have dropped 59%.
- From 2008 to 2023, the **Aurora Police Department Budget per resident increased 52.1% in nominal dollars, but only 7.4% in inflation adjusted dollars.**
- **Aurora's police force strength has not increased with the population.** The number of Aurora Police Department personnel has increased 19.3% since 2008 but decreased 3.7% per 100,000 residents.
- Aurora City Council **revised its civil services hiring practices to remove inefficiencies** and is implementing a new program to monitor crime rates, police department budgets, and manpower.



## Homelessness

Aurora, though it contains a relatively low concentration of homelessness, has emerged as a focal point of Colorado's homelessness problem. Since 2020, its homeless population and especially its unsheltered homelessness rate have grown at alarming levels. Although the most recent trends show stabilization, the city has significant work to do yet.

The system of resources addressing homelessness is at a critical point. Though funding has increased significantly in recent years, much of the increase is from one-time federal, state, and municipal spending that will shrink over the next few budget cycles. As spending on homelessness has risen annually, the unsheltered and chronically homeless populations have also risen. Housing affordability in Colorado has plummeted, overall price levels are at record highs due to inflation, and the state's housing inventory is dangerously low. These are precursors for sustained high levels of newly homeless persons.



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Over the last 5 years, **Aurora's homeless population has grown by 47%**—nearly eight times faster than the city's total population growth between 2019 and 2021.

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Since a low in 2019, the unsheltered share of **Aurora's homeless population has grown by 443%**.

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Since 2019, the number of **chronically homeless in Aurora has risen by 85%**.

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This has occurred despite an **available supply of approximately 6,125 shelter beds** in the Metro Denver region. Previous reporting has indicated many of these beds remain vacant.

# Housing

The City of Aurora has experienced large increases in population for many years. Housing demand has risen accordingly, but unlike other Colorado cities, Aurora has increased the supply of housing to meet demand. The result is that since 2005, average housing prices in Aurora have been lower than the state average despite increasing 121% in the last ten years. The housing outlook, however, continues to face challenges. Combined with 20-year record mortgage rates, affordability has decreased by more than half.

This report analyzes affordability trends and estimates whether there is a deficit or surplus in housing units in Aurora, Colorado.



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Due to elevated prices and rising interest rates, the **affordability of purchasing a home in Aurora is at the lowest point in more than 20 years**, nearly doubling in cost in the last eight.

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**Housing costs are outpacing income**, so home affordability has decreased by 122% since 2013.

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Unlike other Denver Metro cities, the **housing supply deficit in Aurora has been reduced significantly in the last 5 years**.

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**Between approximately 1,166 and 1,804 permits are needed annually** through 2028 to close the city housing supply deficit and meet the demands of future population growth.

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**Aurora's housing gap is nearly closed.**

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**59% of permits issued in Aurora since 2011 are for single-family structures** and 49% for multi-family structures.

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**Homebuilders' confidence has declined 41%** since a recent high in February 2022.

**Stay tuned to CSI for all the latest updates and  
check out all our research [here](#).**

**Don't forget to vote by November 7!**



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