

# Behind The City Scene



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Let's jump into the deep end of the pool! What is a Sanctuary City? Is Aurora a Sanctuary City? The answers can be found on the Internet. I will pause for a moment to let the laughter die down. But it is true and here is why I say this. There is no government sanctioned, promulgated, or published definition. Various persons and entities have taken to the Internet to create both a definition and list of purported Sanctuary Cities. If you have an interest in this subject matter I encourage you to conduct your own research and come to your own conclusions.

There appears to be three criteria. The first one is the formal passage by the City Council of a Resolution declaring the status or in a strong Mayor form of government an unambiguous statement by the Mayor. BTW Aurora is a weak Mayor/strong City Manager form of government. Secondly a statement by a City official that the City will not recognize/enforce "detainers" issued by ICE to hold prisoners 48 hours beyond their otherwise applicable release date. Thirdly a statement by the Chief of Police that the City's police will not enforce Federal immigration laws. As far as I can tell Aurora has met the latter two criteria. I have come to the conclusion that those who constructed the concept would consider Aurora a Sanctuary City. This is confirmed by the results on the various web pages dedicated to this issue.

Now let me be absolutely clear that I take no position on this identification. Reasonable people could be proud and supportive of this status and likewise others could be alarmed and critical. Regardless of your position we will all have to wait and see how the incoming Administration will define the concept and more importantly what punitive measures, if any, will be applied to those cities deemed to be a Sanctuary City. I would note that with respect to the detainer issue we have appropriately declined to honor the one type of ICE detainer that would require a hold of an additional 48 hours of incarceration because of legal liability to the City. We operate a jail which, by Federal guidelines, can only hold prisoners for a maximum of 72 hours. As to the actions of our local police the fact is that city police do not enforce Federal immigration laws. But apparently the public announcement of that fact plays a role in triggering the receipt of the label.

As always I welcome your comments by contacting me at [Richardsonward4@comcast.net](mailto:Richardsonward4@comcast.net)