

AC Decision Support Framework

What is the Decision Support Framework?

A structured guide to deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and foster strategic alignment in decision-making. This framework is meant to strengthen culture and decision-making capacity, not create more paperwork.

Use it to guide what matters—and make your thinking transparent. It supports the county in the development of a thinking discipline to guide and shape comprehensive discussions when decisions are needed. This is a lens, not a scorecard.

Purpose

This framework helps Arapahoe County institutionalize values-based, transparent decision-making. It is intended to assess strategies, initiatives, or decisions based on the County's Mission, Vision, and six strategic lenses (Sustainability, Data Informed, Community Engagement, Collaboration, Financial Implications, and Equity). In particular it intends to:

- Strengthen County operations and decision-making alignment with County strategic plan.
- Foster thoughtful discussion.
- Improve consistency and clarity in board-facing proposals.
- Serve as a thinking tool, not a mandatory pass/fail checklist.
- Cultivate analysis habits, not be a burdensome exercise.

When to Use the Framework

This tool is not required for every operational decision. It will be used:

- When preparing Board Summary Reports.
- Not for drop-ins or third party presentations.
- When presenting initiatives, policy shifts, capital investments, or new programs for BOCC consideration.
- As a training tool for strategic thinking across leadership.

How to Use the Framework

Review the statements in each section (6 strategic lenses + mission/vision). Hover over links for additional guidance and/or definitions.

Mark alignment*:

High – Strong alignment with criteria

Medium – Moderate alignment

Low – Weak alignment

No – Misaligned

N/A – Not applicable-provide justification in notes

Use the Notes section for short explanations (2-3 sentences maximum), if necessary. (Examples: "One-time cost from ARPA," "Limited engagement due to timeline.") Notes should be used to explain how or why it aligns, or doesn't align.

**Do not overthink alignment. Honest responses (including "low" or "no") are valuable to the discussion. Tradeoffs and imperfection are part of the process. The Notes are where the insight lives.*

Name and Title

Daniela Villarreal, Management Analyst

Department, Office, and/or Division

Commissioners' Office

Issue/Initiative for Discussion

Aid to Agencies Award Recommendations

Short Description of Issue/Initiative

The Aid to Agencies Committee comprised of Community Resources Department, Human Resources Department, and Public Health Department will be presenting award recommendations for 2026 based on the new funding framework.

Tips:

Hover your mouse over the links for more information.

Use the Notes field to describe the “why”—even if it seems obvious.

There are 6 categories, each with multiple questions.

Note there is a "Save and Continue Later" option at the bottom right of each page.

Mission & Vision Alignment

Vision: [Initiative](#) enhances quality of life through exceptional, responsible public service.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The statement "Vision: Initiative enhances quality of life through exceptional, responsible public service" connects the Aid to Agencies program to Arapahoe County's broader strategic vision. It emphasizes that the program's funding recommendations support the County's commitment to improving residents' quality of life through responsible stewardship of public resources. By funding nonprofit organizations that address critical needs such as housing, food security, behavioral health, and transportation, the program demonstrates alignment with the County's mission to deliver exceptional public service and ensure resources are used effectively to strengthen the community.

Mission: Initiative contributes to a diverse and vibrant county where everyone can thrive.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The statement "Mission: Initiative contributes to a diverse and vibrant county where everyone can thrive" highlights the Aid to Agencies program's role in advancing Arapahoe County's mission of fostering equity, inclusivity, and community well-being. Through targeted funding of nonprofits that serve vulnerable and underserved populations, the program helps ensure that all residents—regardless of background or circumstance—have access to essential services and opportunities. This mission reinforces the County's commitment to supporting a thriving, connected community where resources are invested in ways that promote diversity, resilience, and shared prosperity.

Sustainability

We analyze county activities through the lens of human, environmental, social, and economic sustainability, so our decisions lead the county toward meeting the needs of today while empowering current and future generations to thrive.

Hollistic. Initiative promotes long-term financial (including one-time and ongoing cost considerations), human, environmental, and social sustainability.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The statement "Holistic: Initiative promotes long-term financial (including one-time and ongoing cost considerations), human, environmental, and social sustainability" emphasizes the Aid to Agencies program's balanced and forward-looking approach to community investment. By funding programs that not only meet immediate needs but also strengthen long-term capacity, the initiative supports sustainable outcomes across multiple dimensions — fiscal responsibility, workforce and community well-being, environmental stewardship, and social equity. This holistic perspective ensures that County resources are used strategically to create lasting value and resilience for residents and the organizations that serve them.

Enduring. The initiative builds lasting, resilient systems rather than offering temporary fixes.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria		X			

Notes

The statement "Enduring: The initiative builds lasting, resilient systems rather than offering temporary fixes" highlights the program's focus on sustainability and long-term impact. Rather than addressing short-term needs alone, the Aid to Agencies program invests in solutions that strengthen community systems, ensuring continued benefits and stability for residents over time.

Established. The systems and infrastructure are in place to support sustainability over time.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria		X			

Notes

"Established: The systems and infrastructure are in place to support sustainability over time" emphasizes that the initiative is built on a strong, reliable foundation. It ensures that the necessary structures, partnerships, and processes already exist to maintain long-term success and effective use of resources.

Established. The people and culture are in place to support sustainability over time.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Data Informed

We use varied data informed and evidence-based best and promising practice tools to inform how best to utilize resources to address challenges.

Quality. Initiative is supported by accurate, relevant, and timely data.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

"Quality: The initiative is supported by accurate, relevant, and timely data" emphasizes that decisions and outcomes are grounded in reliable information. The Aid to Agencies committee reviewed community data from sources including the Community Health Assessment, Community Needs Assessment, Point-in-Time-Count, and prior Aid to Agencies recipient reports and applications.

Accuracy. Data is interpreted and validated by appropriately qualified professionals.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The initiative ensures that data is interpreted and validated by qualified professionals from the Human Services department, Community Resources department, Commissioners' Office, and Public Health Department. .

Application. Data is used to guide decisions rather than simplyjustify them.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The County used a variety of data resources to guide this framework, using established community, housing, behavioral health, and public health studies, census data, as well as annual reports from current providers and recent outcomes identified in American Rescue Plan Act reporting.

Community Engagement

We want to understand and respond to community values in decision-making, meeting people where they are.

Inclusive. Specific communities affected by the initiative have been engaged, as appropriate, and in accessible ways.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

Staff compiled a list of community partners from previous Aid to Agencies and ARPA grant and program cycles. In addition, staff worked with Communications to promote the application opportunity through the County's social media channels and a press release.

Open. We are transparent in sharing what we're doing and why, in a meaningful way.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The Aid to Agencies funding framework was taken to the BOCC during a study session on June 9, 2025. In addition the committee hosted three workshops in August and September to ensure organizations could learn about the new framework and ask questions.

Responsive. Community input and feedback has been considered and reflected, where appropriate, based on genuine understanding.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Collaboration

We work within and across the county to implement outcomes, engaging key [internal and external partners](#) to maximize benefits and increase efficiency.

Strategic. Key partners have been identified and intentionally engaged in a [timely manner](#) to maximize benefit and increase efficiency.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

Key partners have been identified and intentionally engaged to ensure those that provide critical services to community can apply.

Participatory. Collaboration is transparent, inclusive, and responsive to both internal and external [stakeholders](#).

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Defined. County's role is clearly defined as lead, support, or defer.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Financial Implications

We consider long-term and holistic financial implications in decision-making, prioritizing best overall value, responsible use of public funds, and sustainable financial health.

Prudent. Short- and long-term costs are understood, affordable, and balanced with current available resources (including non-monetary assets like equipment or facilities.)

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Efficient. The initiative includes cost-saving measures, external funding, or partnerships where appropriate, and prioritizes best overall value.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Accountable. Public funds are used responsibly, with trade-offs and [non-monetary impacts](#) clearly considered.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The Aid to Agencies program has been a cornerstone initiative for Arapahoe County, providing critical funding to nonprofit organizations that deliver essential services the County would otherwise be unable to offer directly. Through these strategic partnerships, the program helps address service gaps, strengthen community resources, and improve the overall well-being of residents across the County.

Disciplined. One-time and ongoing financial commitments are identified, justified, and planned for in alignment with long-term fiscal health.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The Aid to Agencies program applies this principle by ensuring that all funding recommendations are evaluated within the context of the County's long-term fiscal health. Each grant cycle identifies available resources, aligns funding decisions with established priorities, and ensures that commitments remain financially sustainable. By structuring awards through defined categories and transparent scoring criteria, the program maintains fiscal discipline in how funds are allocated—balancing immediate community needs with long-term responsibility.

Equity

We work with communities impacted by county policies, behaviors, beliefs, practices, and decisions. We seek their voice, consider historical context, and understand intersectional impacts. We anticipate potential obstacles, consider unintended consequences, and work to remove barriers for the betterment of all.

Precautionary. Benefits, challenges, and impacts are understood and addressed, with care taken to avoid unintended harm.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Equitable. The initiative acknowledges and addresses both historical and current [inequities](#).

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Adaptive. The approach is [flexible](#) and inclusive, removing barriers and meeting diverse needs.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria					X

Notes

Please Review Your Responses.

You're almost done!

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You will be emailed a copy of your responses to attach to your BSR. Emails being sent from *noreply@alchemer.com* may get caught in the Outlook Mimecast spam filter and take up to a day to be delivered. (After you "permit" the email in Mimecast, delivery time should be quicker for future submissions.)

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Enter your email address below and click Submit.

Email Address

dvillarreal@arapahoegov.com

Thank you for taking the time to complete the Decision Support Framework survey.

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