

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

Gini Pingenot, Open Spaces Director

Department, Office, and/or Division

Open Spaces Department

Issue/Initiative for Discussion

2026 Fair Plan

Short Description of Issue/Initiative

Strategic Recommendations to Modify the 2026 Fair to Help Address Fiscal Solvency

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 County Fair is an important 'identify' event for the county. Among other goals, it's a celebration of the county's heritage. For the last several years, the cost of the fair has outpaced fair revenue. Addressing this deficit is important to the Fair's long term solvency.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The County's Fair attracts roughly 25,000 attendees every year. Demographic data related to age, income, and ethnicity has been recorded for several years and is available at any time.

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

Adjustments to fair operations and logistics is an on-going, annual task. Proposed changes for the 2026 Fair are based on a desire to keep the fair affordable for families while being mindful about the level of county subsidization for the event. Adding continued value to the fair each year is another important value. This inevitably results in additional costs of producing the fair.

Enduring. The initiative builds lasting, resilient [systems](#) rather than offering temporary fixes.

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The event industry is fluid and requires a certain aspect of nimbleness. Aspects of the fair that are more systemic in nature (security, parking) are being examined to achieve quality while not duplicating efforts of, for example, the Sheriff's Office.

Established. The systems and infrastructure are in place to support sustainability [over time](#).

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria		X			

Notes

The fair will always need to be examined from a fiscal sustainability lens. The Open Spaces Sales and Use Tax is not allowed to support the fair. The fair's financial stability is tied largely to the success of the event center (weddings, expos, etc.) + fair ticket prices.

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

Proposals for the 2026 Fair were developed by interdisciplinary workgroups, analysis of past financials, knowledge of neighboring fair operations, and staff expertise.

Accuracy. Data is [interpreted and validated](#) by appropriately [qualified professionals](#).

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

Application. Data is used to guide decisions rather than simply [justify them](#).

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

Our work began with various options on how to move forward. The recommendations presented in this study session were arrived at based on the data and information collected over a 6 week period.

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

These recommendations have not been tested/socialized among the public.

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

We have relied on the expertise of county staff, our carnival operator and other community fair staff to help shape these recommendations.

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

Our work began in mid August by convening Open Spaces and Commissioner Office staff to talk about how best to examine changes to the 2026 fair. Workgroups were then established to tackle specific topics over a 6 week period. Workgroup's presented their findings and their pros/cons list to the broader group in early October. Recommendations shared at the 10/27 Study Session represent the consensus of this larger group.

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

Some of the recommendations include operational changes which will help reduce county Fair expenses.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

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

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

Even though we are suggesting a higher ticket price, we wish to continue to explore a senior discount day option and ways to alleviate fair ticket costs to those paying by cash (and thus avoiding the credit card processing fees).