



## Board Summary Report

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**File #:** 26-215

**Agenda Date:** 4/21/2026

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**To:** Board of County Commissioners

**Through:** Michelle Halstead, Acting Director, Facilities and Fleet Management

**Prepared By:**  
Cedar Blazek, Energy Program Manager, Facilities and Fleet Management

**Presenter:** Cedar Blazek, Energy Program Manager, Facilities and Fleet Management

**Subject:**  
10:00 AM \*Arapahoe County Sustainability Initiative

**Purpose and Request:**

This informational presentation provides a comprehensive update on Arapahoe County's Sustainability Initiative, including progress to date, measurable outcomes, and proposed next steps to expand the program countywide. Staff are seeking Board acknowledgment of program direction and concurrence to proceed with identified next steps, including continued participation in external partnerships, development of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals, and advancement of operational sustainability initiatives.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure - Support environmentally responsible development and energy efficiency in county operations.

**Background and Discussion:** To date, the County has achieved measurable sustainability results through energy and resource management efforts. Since 2016, utility consumption has decreased by 30% in electricity, 9% in natural gas, and 31% in water, while maintaining stable utility budgets since 2023 despite rising costs. These outcomes have been driven by Strategic Energy Management practices, optimization of water and waste systems, cross-departmental employee engagement supported by a formal sustainability committee, regional collaboration with peer governments and organizations such as DRCOG, and consistent internal communication and reporting. The Sustainability Initiative is now entering its next phase focused on greater integration across departments and alignment with broader County priorities. Current and emerging efforts include participation in Xcel Energy electrification programs (no-cost advisory and planning support), expansion of waste diversion and composting programs, evaluation of greenhouse gas reduction targets for County operations and the broader community, pursuit of Colorado Green Business Network recognition, and a comprehensive assessment of sustainability efforts across all departments. Collectively, these efforts position the County to transition from isolated projects to a coordinated, data-driven sustainability framework.

**Alternatives:** : The Board has the following alternatives:

- 1) The Board could choose not to advance the proposed initiatives and instead continue with the current approach of incremental, department-led sustainability efforts. While this would

maintain existing operations, it would likely result in: missed opportunities for larger-scale cost savings and efficiencies, reduced ability to meet future regulatory or performance requirements, and limited progress toward coordinated, countywide sustainability outcomes.

- 2) The Board could choose to advance select components of the Sustainability Initiative while deferring others for future consideration. For example, the Board may support continuation of no-cost external partnerships (e.g., Xcel Energy electrification programs) and incremental operational improvements, while postponing more comprehensive efforts such as development of countywide greenhouse gas reduction targets or pursuit of external certifications. This approach allows the County to continue building on existing successes with minimal resource commitment, while limiting near-term expansion of the program. However, it may reduce the overall impact and pace of progress, result in a more fragmented approach to implementation, and delay opportunities for larger-scale operational efficiencies, funding, or regional leadership

**Fiscal Impact:** There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with the proposed next steps, except for the Energy Performance Contract which will be addressed in a separate, upcoming meeting. The other identified actions can be completed using existing staff resources and no-cost external programs. Future initiatives, such as potential certification programs, detailed greenhouse gas accounting and inventories, and capital improvements may have associated costs and will be brought to the Board for consideration and approval as they are developed.

**Alignment with Strategic Implementation Strategies:** The attached framework helps Arapahoe County institutionalize values-based, transparent decision-making, documenting how we make decisions and carry out actions to achieve the county's strategic plan.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Board acknowledge the progress of the Sustainability Initiative and support advancement of the proposed next steps to further institutionalize sustainability across County operations.

**Concurrence:** N/A