

AID TO AGENCIES

Study Session
June 9, 2025

PURPOSE

1. Overview of the Aid to Agencies
2. Key service gaps and unmet community needs
3. Strategic realignment with County goals
4. Proposed framework revisions
5. Discussion and questions

BACKGROUND



HISTORY

Aid to Agencies was created in 2008 to support non-profit organizations filling service gaps in the county.

- Since inception, awarded \$27,030,296 to 51 unique organizations.
- Operational improvements are considered on an annual basis.
- Programmatic improvements are considered every few years.

Outcomes from the last programmatic review in 2021:

- Created a safety net program and a competitive grant program; capped competitive requests at \$100K.
- Established prioritized funding categories.
- Required more detailed reporting and framework for acknowledging the County investment.
- Ensured alignment with the strategic plan.

CURRENT PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

Total budget \$2,079,500, split between two categories of funding:

- \$1,550,603 allocated for eight **safety net organizations**.
- \$528,897 for **competitive grants**.

Nine programmatic funding categories: affordable housing, case management, domestic violence support, employment skills and services, food assistance, mental and behavioral health, substance abuse, shelter, and transportation.

- Competitive grants have a cap of \$100,000.
- Organizations receiving \$100,000+ are required to report quarterly; others annually.
- Safety nets are required to provide a mid-year study session to the BOCC.

PROGRAMMATIC PAUSE



The last competitive grant cycle occurred in 2023 for funding in 2024.

The County's 2024 budget challenges resulted in a pause in the grant program and a significant reduction in safety net funding.

Passage of ballot issue 1A:

- Reinstated safety net funding for eight organizations at 100%.
- Offered opportunity to **reimagine the Aid to Agencies program and how it is funded.**

REIMAGINING AID TO AGENCIES

COMMUNITY SERVICE GAPS: Housing

725 individuals experiencing homelessness (based on 2025 PIT count)

- 57% sheltered
- 43% unsheltered

Housing burden 33.64%

- 7,000+ units needed to fill affordability shortage

Evictions remain high

- 2025 – 4,187 residential eviction filings
- 2024 – 11,104 residential eviction filings
- 2023 – 9,438 residential eviction filings



COMMUNITY SERVICE GAPS: Mental & Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse

Arapahoe County is designated as a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area, indicating a significant gap between the demand for and supply of mental health services.

Some medical programs have long waitlists or closed due to funding decreases, making health services less available to residents.

- Highlighted a growing need for mental health services, particularly among low-income residents and those experiencing homelessness.
- [1 in 5](#) U.S. adults experience mental illness annually; [1 in 20](#) experience serious mental illness.
- [1 in 6](#) U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder annually
- [50%](#) of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24
- Suicide is the [2nd leading](#) cause of death among people aged 10-14



COMMUNITY SERVICE GAPS: Food Insecurity

Nutrition programs are a major service gap within the County, especially for at-risk individuals, seniors, disabled people, refugees, school-age children, and families impacted by COVID.

- Food assistance ranked among the top four community needs in every 2023 survey.
- Demand continues to grow, but funding has not kept pace. Key barriers include economic hardship, geographic isolation, and limited transportation.



COMMUNITY SERVICE GAPS: Reliable Transportation

Transportation is a top priority, with residents emphasizing the need for on-time, accessible service for medical appointments, grocery shopping, and essential errands.

Key identified gaps include:

- Demand exceeds available options
- Reduced bus service; light rail is costly & lacks full coverage
- Limited availability & reliability of Access-a-Ride/Taxi
- Long waitlists and information gaps on qualifying services
- Difficulty with applications for assistance



TARGETED ARPA INVESTMENTS DEMONSTRATED BENEFITS



Housing/Homelessness: **\$25 million** supported the development of over 600 additional affordable housing units and over 900 shelter/transitional housing beds; **\$1,500,000** supported over **2,200 individuals** with eviction-related legal education, advice, representation, and social services.



Mental Health: **\$3,905,005** reached over **15,000 students** through school-based mental health programs, engaged more than **5,425 individuals**, and supported **92 community trainings and events**.



Food Assistance: **\$2,985,827** provided nutritious meals to **60,000+ individuals** across the county.



Transportation: **\$75,000** helped over **400 households**, delivering more than **7,845 rides** to those in need of reliable transportation.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Shift from funding structure to outcome-driven investment.

Align resources with County's vision of economic mobility and the Strategic Plan's focus areas:

- Safe and Healthy Communities
- Economic Resilience and Stability
- Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure
- Workforce and Community Prosperity

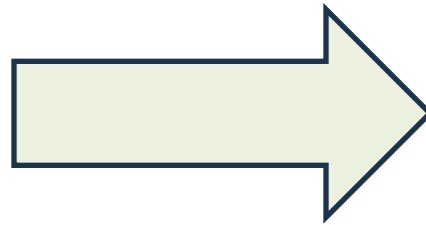


PROPOSED FRAMEWORK REVISIONS

TARGETED FUNDING CATEGORIES

Narrowed categories to align with current community needs and strategic plan:

- Affordable housing
- Case management
- Domestic violence support
- Employment skills/services
- Food assistance
- Mental/behavioral health
- Substance abuse
- Shelter
- Transportation



- Housing/Homeless services
- Food Assistance
- Mental & Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse
- Transportation

TARGETED SERVICE POPULATIONS

Prioritize vulnerable populations in program and service funding—especially seniors, youth, minorities, justice-involved individuals, and disabled people.

Disabled People

- 7.7% of residents under 65 have a disability

Seniors

- Fastest-growing population
- 25% face mental health issues
- 10% are food insecure

Youth

- 1 in 30 face homelessness every year
- 20% experience mental health issues
- Low-income youth often face educational barriers that lead to long-term disadvantages.

Minorities

Black & Hispanic communities face higher food insecurity, systemic inequities

Justice-Involved

- 111% higher return-to-jail if given psychotropic meds in a jail stay than those who did not.
- Black individuals' return-to-jail rate is 27% higher than that of those not identifying as black.
- Black individuals' average length of stay is 16 days longer than that of those not identifying as black.

SAFETY NET DEFINITION

Safety nets are nonprofit entities that provide essential services to vulnerable or underserved populations. These organizations are distinguished by:

- Sole provider of essential service
- Do not duplicate County programs
- High-need and high-impact
- Must demonstrate service uniqueness and demand

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Establish funding allocations for each of four categories.

- Leverage existing program funding as the baseline.
- Prioritize funding based on targeted populations.

Competitive application process for nonprofits within each program category.

- Clear evaluation criteria to demonstrate alignment and intended impact.
- Retain \$100K funding cap.

Maintain limited funding for safety net organizations.

- Limit the number of organizations based on definition.
- Off-the-top allocation; two-year funding, with option to renew.

PROPOSED PROGRAM GRANT CYCLE

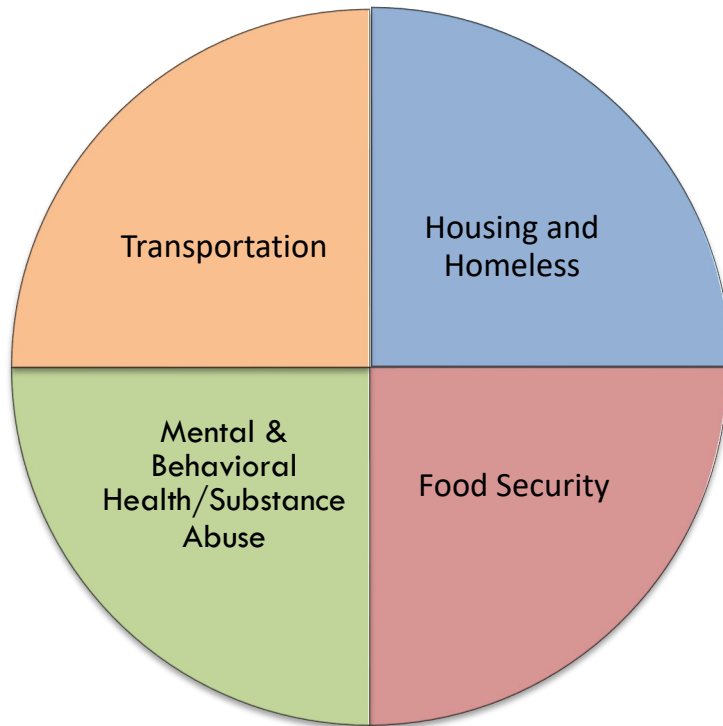
Funds would begin in FY 2026

- July/August: Announce Aid to Agencies program, hosting grant workshops.
- August 1 to October 3, 2025: Applications available for submittal by deadline.
- October: Internal committee reviews applications; 2026 recommended budget released.
- November 18: BOCC study session for grant award recommendations.
- November/December: Award notifications; 2026 budget adopted.
- January 2026: Process invoices.

PROPOSED FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

FUNDING OPTIONS

EQUAL DISTRIBUTION



DATA- INFORMED DISTRIBUTION



Leverage historical Aid to Agencies award data to inform allocations.



Prioritizes community needs and service gaps



Alignment with the Strategic Plan



Proven strategic investment outcomes

OPTION A - EQUAL DISTRIBUTION

CATEGORY	PERCENT	DOLLAR AMOUNT
Housing and Homeless Services	25%	\$374,875
Food Security	25%	\$374,875
Mental & Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse	25%	\$374,875
Transportation	25%	\$374,875
Safety Nets	-	\$580,000
TOTAL		\$2,079,500

PROS

- Simple and fast to administer.
- Perceived as fair and unbiased.
- Offers predictable support.

CONS

- Doesn't align with need or impact.
- Undermines strategic priorities.
- Limits funding for high-performing organizations.
- Becomes ineffective at scale.

OPTION B – DATA INFORMED DISTRIBUTION

CATEGORY	PERCENT	DOLLAR AMOUNT
Housing and Homeless Services	40%	\$599,800
Food Security	30%	\$449,850
Mental & Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse	27%	\$404,865
Transportation	3%	\$44,985
Safety Nets	-	\$580,000
TOTAL		\$2,079,500

PROS

- Demonstrates evidence-based resource allocation.
- Perceived as neutral and data-driven.
- Builds on proven return on investment.

CONS

- Could disadvantage new or innovative programs.
- May not reflect long-term or emerging needs.
- May perpetuate outdated funding patterns.

FUNDING IMPACT OF POTENTIAL BUDGET PACKAGES BY OPTION

CATEGORY	OPTION A				OPTION B			
	PERCENT	CURRENT BUDGET	\$500K	\$1 MILLION	PERCENT	CURRENT BUDGET	\$500K	\$1 MILLION
Housing & Homeless Services	25%	\$374,875	\$499,875	\$624,875	40%	\$599,800	\$799,800	\$999,800
Food Security	25%	\$374,875	\$499,875	\$624,875	30%	\$449,850	\$599,850	\$749,850
Mental & Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse	25%	\$374,875	\$499,875	\$624,875	27%	\$404,865	\$539,865	\$674,865
Transportation	25%	\$374,875	\$499,875	\$624,875	3%	\$44,985	\$59,985	\$74,985
Safety Nets	-	\$580,000	\$580,000	\$580,000	-	\$580,000	\$580,000	\$580,000
TOTALS		\$2,079,500	\$ 2,579,500	\$3,079,500		\$2,079,500	\$2,579,500	\$3,079,500

BOARD DISCUSSION

BOARD DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED REVISIONS

Should the grant program be aligned with four program categories based on the strategic plan and community needs?

Should funding allocations be established within program categories for a competitive grant process?

Should the definition of a safety net organization be revised, and should there be a limiting number/off-top allocation?

Determine preferred funding allocation option

Should the \$100,000 award cap per applicant be maintained?

Should funding be prioritized based on targeted populations?

Should the 2026 grant application timeline be affirmed?

Should budget packages be submitted for 2026 consideration?

THANK YOU!