



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

Arapahoe *Forward*



2025
**STRATEGIC
PLAN**

As Colorado's oldest county, we have a lot of history to reflect on. And while we take immense pride in our accomplishments, we also want to focus on what's ahead. That's why county commissioners and elected leaders regularly review and refine the County's Strategic Plan to ensure that our path forward will lead us to success.

This Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for our work. Inside, read more about the four focus areas that shape our policies, provide direction, and give us a set of objectives that will help us fulfill our mission and vision.

Vision

We envision a diverse and vibrant community where everyone can thrive.

This vision serves as the foundation of our strategic planning efforts and guides our work in many ways. A vision helps us understand the end goal—where we want to be. In talking about how to get there, how to reach that shared vision, we often came back to the same question: How do we use policy to build that future vision of Arapahoe County that we hear our residents talk about?

Strategic focus guides our work

Having a vision is great but getting there is a bit more complicated. That's why the Board created four strategic focus areas to guide us on this journey. First and foremost, these focus areas will guide our policy work, as they provide a powerful lens in our long-term efforts. We urge employees to use these as guidelines for their own work, especially as it pertains to work presented to the Board. Under each focus area, you'll see the objectives where we'll put our time and effort.

SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Build a community where all people feel secure, supported, and can access essential safety, health and social services.

Why this is important: A thriving community relies on strong public safety, public health and human services. By addressing economic stability, mental health, substance abuse, education, and housing, we break cycles of poverty and enhance well-being. Through victim services, crisis response and community engagement, we foster safety, connection, and support for all people.

Objectives:

- Advance public safety by strengthening partnerships across law enforcement, emergency response, and community stakeholders.
- Expand mental and behavioral health service partnerships, crisis response, and co-responder programs.
- Enhance victim services and support for survivors that have been harmed by crime.
- Improve public health initiatives, including access to food security programs, healthcare, and immunizations.
- Address housing stability through homelessness prevention, rental assistance, and community partnerships.
- Reduce social isolation and increase community engagement to foster belonging and cohesion.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND STABILITY

Strengthen the county's economic foundation by ensuring financial sustainability, housing security, and business growth.

Why this is important: A strong economy requires financial sustainability, business support, and stable housing. By ensuring long-term economic stability, expanding access to capital and resources, and supporting affordable housing initiatives, we create a resilient foundation for businesses, workers, and families.

Objectives:

- Support long-term economic resilience through responsible fiscal and investment strategies.
- Expand access to capital and business resources to support small business growth.
- Increase job opportunities and business development initiatives to sustain a strong local economy.
- Maintain and improve affordable housing initiatives, including housing preservation and homeownership support.
- Enhance property tax assistance programs to reduce financial strain on vulnerable populations.
- Strengthen systems-level investments and partnerships that advance food security and essential human services to promote economic stability.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Plan for long-term growth by prioritizing community infrastructure, housing diversity, smart development, and environmental sustainability.

Why this is important: Sustainable growth requires smart development, resilient infrastructure, and responsible resource management. By prioritizing environmental health, housing, transportation, and economic development, we ensure long-term prosperity while promoting environmental responsibility. Strategic investments in roads, open spaces, and public transit create a more connected and accessible county for all.

Objectives:

- Implement smart growth policies to align housing, transportation, open spaces and economic development.
- Prioritize capital improvement projects (CIP) including deferred maintenance.
- Support environmentally responsible development and energy efficiency in county operations.
- Enhance public transit and transportation options to improve mobility and job access.
- Strengthen city-county partnerships to create aligned and effective investments.
- Maximize use of County facilities and assets.

WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY PROSPERITY

Develop a thriving workforce and inclusive economy that supports people, businesses, and employees.

Why this is important: We are committed to building a skilled workforce that is well-supported and prepared to meet community needs.

A strong and engaged workforce drives economic opportunity and community well-being. By ensuring competitive wages, training opportunities, and equitable access to resources, we foster long-term career growth, business success, and economic mobility.

Objectives:

- Provide competitive wages, benefits, and workforce policies that attract and retain top talent, as is financially sustainable.
- Expand apprenticeship programs, internships, and workforce training opportunities.
- Strengthen career pathways and economic mobility by increasing access to education and job placement.

- Support equitable access to resources for underserved communities.
- Promote and pursue a full continuum of housing options to support long-term economic stability.
- Improve childcare access to support working families and increase labor force participation.

The Glue

So, what holds all this work together? We apply good governance principles to everything we do to achieve success and maximum impact. Good governance ensures operational excellence by removing barriers, delivering exceptional service, and upholding public trust.

It promotes transparency, accountability, innovation and efficiency while adapting to the County's evolving needs. In practical terms, good governance helps us:

- Deliver mandated and essential services with excellence.
- Plan for future service, infrastructure, and fiscal needs.
- Increase collaboration to break down silos and maximize resources.
- Understand and respond to community needs, interests, and values.
- Operate in a transparent, inclusive and communicative manner.
- Proactively advocate for the County's needs in legislative solutions.
- Leverage technology to improve governance and service delivery.

Arapahoe County Mission

We deliver exceptional County services and use resources responsibly to advance quality of life.

Our mission is our contract with our residents. It's why we're here.

How are we doing this?

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

- **Community Engagement.** We want to understand and respond to community values in decision-making, meeting people where they are.
- **Collaboration.** We work within and across the organization to implement outcomes.
- **Financial Implications.** We consider long-term and holistic financial implications in decision-making.
- **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.

What guides us

Our work is rooted in our shared values—guidelines for how we want to approach our work and the goals we want to achieve.

Accountability

We demonstrate accountability by:

- Building trust with community through our decisions and actions.
- Holding ourselves to established clear standards, processes, and procedures.
- Adhering to a high standard of integrity.
- Sharing data and information to demonstrate fiscal responsibility, community responsiveness, and progress on the County's strategic plan.

Accessibility

We demonstrate accessibility by:

- Providing services in multiple ways.
- Seeking and understanding community interests using a variety of approaches.
- Making it easy to contact and connect with the right elected official and staff members.
- Being timely in responding to community interests.
- Providing facility access to people with differing abilities.

Inclusivity

We demonstrate inclusivity by:

- Engaging community and cultural perspectives in decision-making.
- Striving for cross-county, cross-cultural representation on advisory boards, committees, and task forces.

- Demonstrating inclusivity in our recruitment, development, and opportunities for advancement.
- Ensuring a welcoming, safe, and respectful environment by reflecting the diversity of Arapahoe County.

Integrity

We demonstrate integrity by:

- Doing what we say we will.
- Following up, being responsive.
- Sharing both the good and the bad.
- Willing to admit/own where there is a problem.
- Adhering to the County Code of Ethics.

What's Next

This plan is designed to be a living document and intended to be regularly reviewed and updated, with routine reports on results. Our strategic plan will inform and guide county leaders in delivering essential services, re-prioritizing work, and adjusting programs in response to changing realities, community feedback, and resource availability. Learn more about our progress at arapahoeco.gov

Board of County Commissioners

Carrie Warren-Gully, District 1

Jessica Campbell, District 2

Jeff Baker, District 3

Leslie Summey, District 4

Rhonda Fields, District 5

Elected Officials

PK Kaiser, Assessor

Joan Lopez, Clerk and Recorder

Dr. Kelly Lear, Coroner

Amy Padden, District Attorney

Michael Westerberg, Treasurer

Tyler S. Brown, Sheriff