

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

Jessica Savko, Budget Manager

Department, Office, and/or Division

Finance Department, Budget Division

Issue/Initiative for Discussion

2025 Q4 Budget Review

Short Description of Issue/Initiative

Supplemental budget requests impacting the 2025 and 2026 budgets.

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

These proposed budget adjustments would allow Departments and Offices throughout the County to carry out programs and services that enhance quality of life

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

These proposed budget adjustments would allow Departments and Offices throughout the County to contribute to a diverse county.

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.

Holistic. 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

These proposed budget adjustments would provide financial support for promoting long-term sustainability. Examples include replacing or retaining equipment for various departments and offices to carry out their essential functions and services.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria		X			

Notes

Some of the proposed budget adjustments are through grants that are temporary in nature but promotes the long-term financial sustainability of the County.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria		X			

Notes

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

Departments and Offices provided current and relevant data when the supplemental budget requests were submitted with the quarterly projections.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

The Budget Division reviewed and presented the data for the supplementals to the Executive Budget Committee prior to the study session.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

Current year projections and future year forecasts were provided for the five major operating funds to help guide the Executive Budget Committee and Board of County Commissioners on the fiscal impacts of the requested supplementals.

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

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

Supporting projections and forecasts are attached to the Board Summary Report for the study session and were discussed with the Executive Budget Committee prior to the study session.

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

The Executive Budget Committee meets to review the supplemental budget requests to make recommendations to the BOCC prior to the study session and is able to follow-up with departments and offices as needed to gain additional information to make decisions that impact the budget.

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

	High	Med	Low	No	N/A
Criteria	X				

Notes

All departments and offices provide quarterly projections and have the opportunity to request a change to their budget. Then the Executive Budget Committee reviews the supplemental requests and they're discussed with the BOCC at a study session that some of the departments and offices attend

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

One-time and ongoing costs are identified for the supplementals and the EBC and BOCC consider the requests in the context of the current and projected financial condition of the funds being impacted.

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

Funding in the proposed supplementals includes grants and various partnerships.

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 EBC and BOCC consider the supplemental requests and suggest non-emergency requests be part of the annual budget process. This gives the opportunity to consider the requests and their prioritization compared to other requests 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

Supporting documentation for the study session includes the fiscal impacts and identifies one-time vs ongoing requests in the Board Summary Report.

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

The funding aspects of the impacts are discussed with the Executive Budget Committee and the Board of County Commissioners prior to and at the study session.

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!

ATTENTION! Mimecast and PDF Responses

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.)

If you need a copy of your PDF responses *immediately*, click the Back button below and look for the Download PDF Version link at the bottom of the page.

Editing/Reviewing

The email will also contain an Edit Link if you need to edit your responses or if you need to forward to others for final review/editing.

Enter your email address below and click Submit.

Email Address

jsavko@arapahoegov.com

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

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