



ARAPAHOE COUNTY





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Arapahoe County Sustainability Initiative

BOCC Strategic Update

April 21st, 2026



ARAPAHOE COUNTY



Happy Earth Day! 4/22/26





Sustainability Program: Where We've Been

Staffing

- 2005 - Energy Program Manager position established
- 2018 - Sustainability Committee launched
- 2019 - Building Automation Specialist position established

Major Projects

- 2005 and 2014 - Energy Performance Contracts to upgrade assets
- Overachieved savings ahead of schedule
- CIP: Major mechanical and electrical equipment upgrades across sites

Planning & Execution

- 2020 - Energy Action Plan (Xcel Partners in Energy)
- Roadmap for energy reductions across County facilities – goals significantly exceeded
- Strategic Energy Management and Fleet Electrification Programs completed



What is sustainability?

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”



Strategic Plan Alignment

- ✓ **County Mission:** We deliver exceptional County services and use resources responsibly to advance quality of life.
- ✓ **Decision-Making Considerations:** Lens of Sustainability
- ✓ **Focus Area: Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure**
 - ✓ Prioritize capital improvement projects (CIP) including deferred maintenance.
 - ✓ Support environmentally responsible development and energy efficiency in county operations.





Sustainability at Arapahoe County



Balancing environmental stewardship, fiscal responsibility, and community well-being



Practical actions that reduce waste, save energy/water, and strengthen resilience



Success comes from collaboration and embedding sustainability into everyday operations



Tangible Success to Date

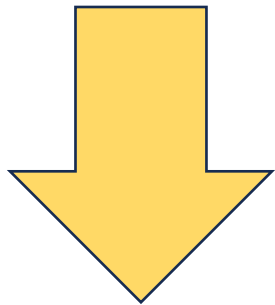
- **Strategic Energy Management**
 - **Water Conservation & Waste Diversion**
 - **Employee Engagement**
 - **State Benchmarking & Performance**
-



Utility Reductions



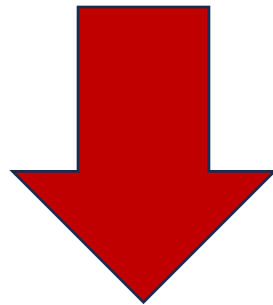
Electricity



30%



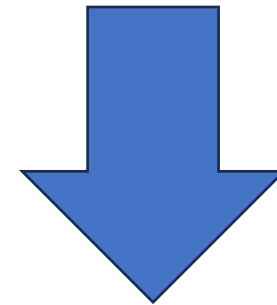
Natural Gas



9%



Water



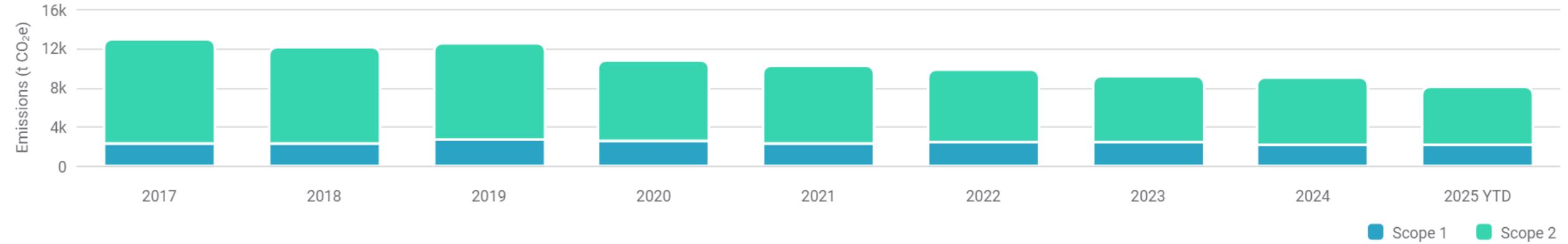
31%

Annual Comparison of 2025 vs 2016


Utilities have stayed under same budget since 2023, even with rising costs


Facility GHG Reductions

38%





This reduction is equivalent to:

655 homes' energy use for one year 



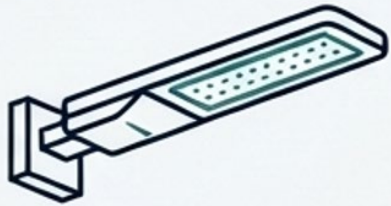
or

1,137 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for one year 





Actions that Reduced Energy



High-ROI Infrastructure Upgrades

Lighting and HVAC modernization, most recently at Admin, SCO, and Centrepont.



Precision Management

Strict temperature bands, automated occupancy scheduling, and continuous controls monitoring.

Integrating these into preventative maintenance successfully

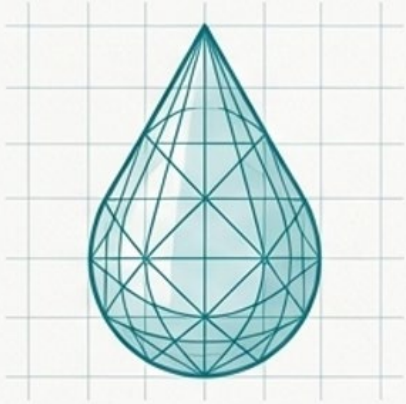


Strategic Energy Management

Successful partnership with Xcel Energy, implementing Energy Action Plan and Strategic Energy Management Program, exceeding performance goals.



Optimized Water and Waste Systems



Water Conservation & Risk Reduction



Deployment of advanced smart irrigation controls and drought-tolerant landscaping at the Admin building.



Success of the incentivized staff leak-detection reporting program, actively preventing property damage and water waste.



Waste Diversion & Digital Transformation



Implementation of centralized waste and recycling logistics, dramatically improving collection efficiency.



Significant, measurable reduction in paper overhead achieved through county-wide process digitization.



Driving Bottom-Up Efficiency with Engagement



Active Volunteer Network

Dedicated 30-person internal committee meeting quarterly to share cross-departmental efficiency tactics

Consistent Communication

Publication of quarterly sustainability update in the ACWeekly newsletter, maintaining staff awareness

Government Partnerships

Connections with Arapahoe County City Sustainability leaders, Denver Regional Council of Governments Building Policy Collaborative

Regulatory Compliance



CO HB21-1286

Buildings over 50,000 sq.
ft. must:

- ✓ report energy use
- ✓ meet minimum performance targets

Status	Property Name
<i>In Compliance</i>	WAREHOUSE - FEDERAL
<i>In Compliance</i>	CENTRE POINT PLAZA
<i>In Compliance</i>	COURTHOUSE II
<i>In Compliance</i>	COURTHOUSE I
<i>In Compliance</i>	ARAPAHOE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION ...
<i>In Compliance</i>	ALTURA PLAZA
<i>In Compliance</i>	SHERIFF/CORONER BUILDING
<i>In Compliance</i>	Arapahoe Plaza South
<i>In Compliance</i>	DETENTION CENTER

- Arapahoe County is compliant with reporting, and is working towards performance goals



Where We're Heading

- **Energy Program 3.0 & Integrated Sustainability**
 - **Strategic Planning & EPC Update**
 - **Resource Stewardship & Circularity**
 - **Greenhouse Gas Reductions**
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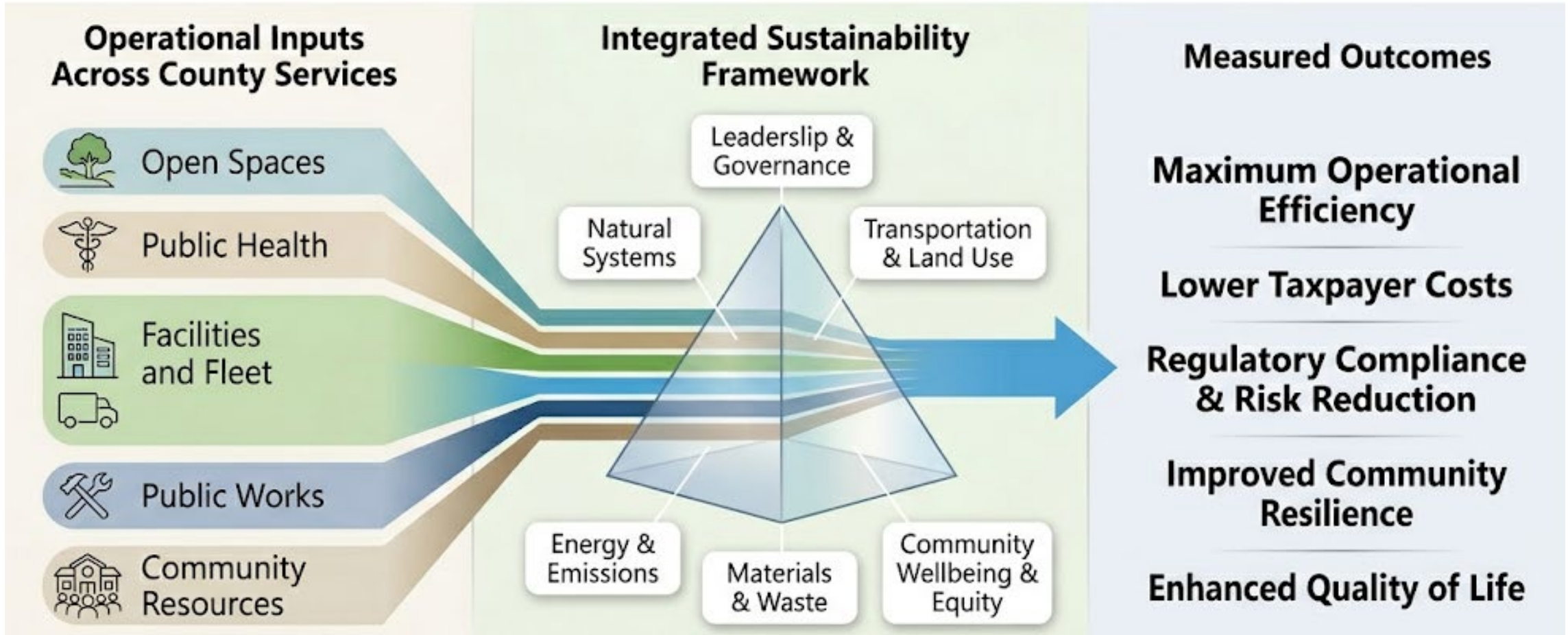
The Next Evolution of County Operations

THE OPERATIONAL MATURITY MODEL

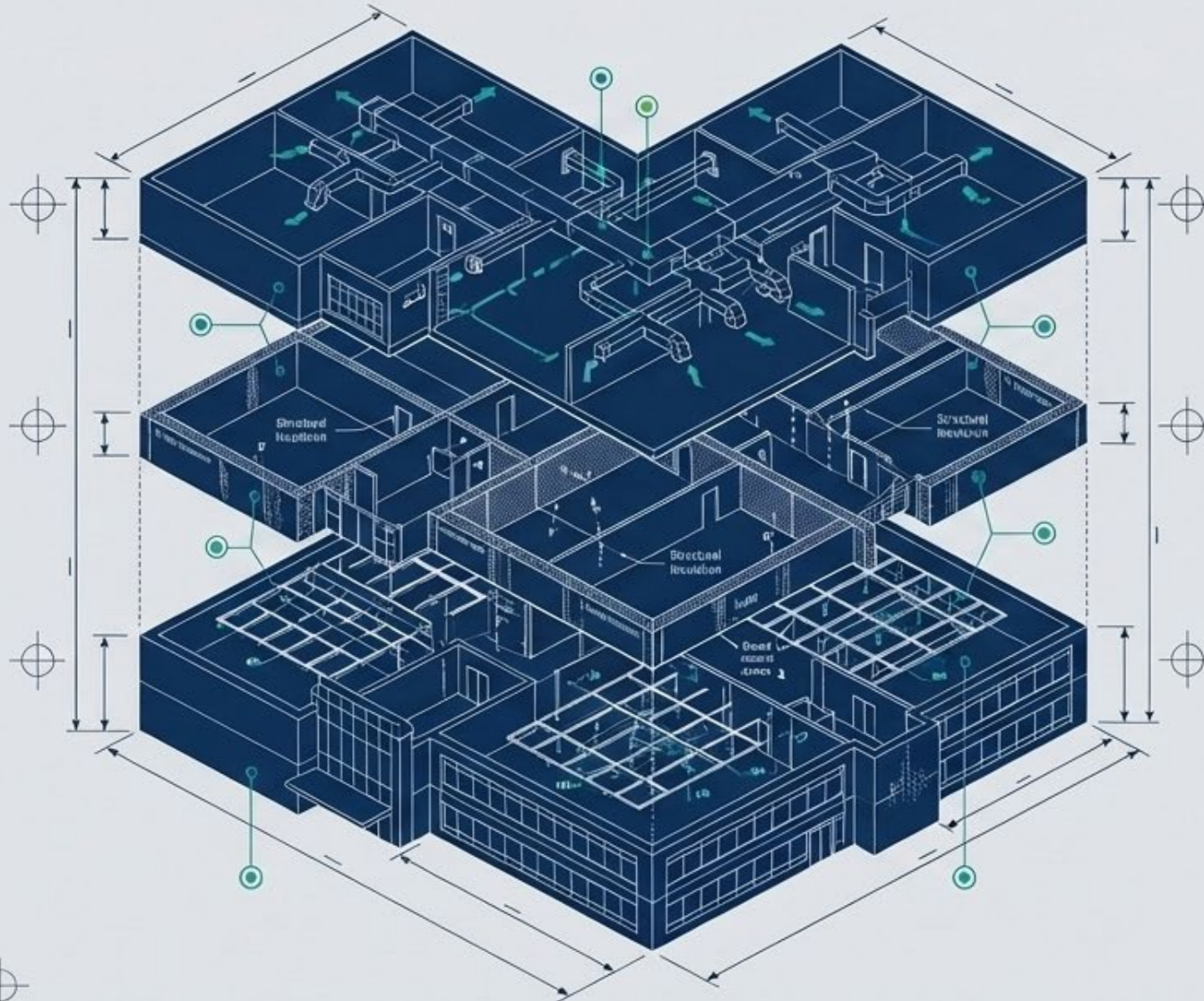
Phase 1: Facilities-Led Interventions	Phase 2: Strategic Integration
Opportunistic upgrades and single-point fixes.	Guaranteed energy performance contracts and master planning.
Anecdotal wins and localized savings estimates.	Verified, county-wide benchmarking and GHG inventories.
Primarily isolated to the Facilities (FFM) department.	An operational lens applied across all county departments.



Applying a Strategic Sustainability Lens



Master Planning for Guaranteed Performance



The 2026 Energy Performance Contract (EPC)

Initiating a comprehensive update focused entirely on deep energy retrofits that come with contractually guaranteed cost savings. An update will be presented in July.

Facility Right-Sizing

Integrating operational footprint reductions directly into the upcoming county facility Master Plan update, optimizing space to eliminate unnecessary utility overhead.

Electrification - Xcel Energy Programs

Beneficial Electrification Action Planning



Update and addendum to
Energy Action Plan of 2020

No Cost Analysis, Report,
& Implementation
Support

Fleet Electrification Advisory Program



Update with new vehicles
from existing 2022 analysis



Waste Reduction and Diversion



Improve and centralize collection of hard-to-recycle and hazardous materials across Depts



Evaluate and expand composting opportunities both internally (Detention Center) and externally



Partner and support local governments waste diversion efforts



Future Discussion - Greenhouse Gas Goals

Facility and Fleet Goal

Why: To ensure environmental accountability with assets under our control



Net CO2 Emissions:
8,014 tons

- ✓ Already track GHG emissions for facilities and fleets
- ✓ Could set and likely achieve a goal of 2% per year

County-Wide Target

Why: To ensure environmental stewardship of our community, doing our part for a global issue



Net CO2 Emissions:
6,396,860 tons

- ✓ Could be part of DRCOG Power Up Program and associated grant funding



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

Colorado Green Business Network

Free and voluntary program that encourages, supports and rewards organizations that push toward true operational sustainability.

Arapahoe County could apply to become 1 of 6* local governments recognized through the program.



Silver (50 Points): Recognizes organizations who have begun to integrate sustainability into multiple aspects of their organization with regard to both policy decisions and completed efficiency upgrades.

<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/dehs/sustainability/cgbn>

*City of Thornton, Boulder County Resource Conservation Division, Denver Arts & Venues, Larimer County, City of Salida



Next Steps



Get Recognized by CGBN

Apply for Colorado Green Business Network Silver and celebrate with public announcement



Leverage Xcel Electrification Programs

Proceed with Xcel Beneficial Electrification Plan and Fleet Advisory Program, publish reports



Publish Sustainability Webpage

Highlight impact, lead by example, and share community resources



Execute EPC and Master Planning

Ensure operational cost and sustainability goals and met



Apply Sustainability Lens to Departments

Benchmark existing sustainability efforts and identify opportunities



Prepare for GHG goal setting later in 2026

➤ *Most actions are no-cost to County and can be completed with existing staff*



End
