

Economic Development

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS STUDY SESSION

AUGUST 11, 2026



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

Purpose

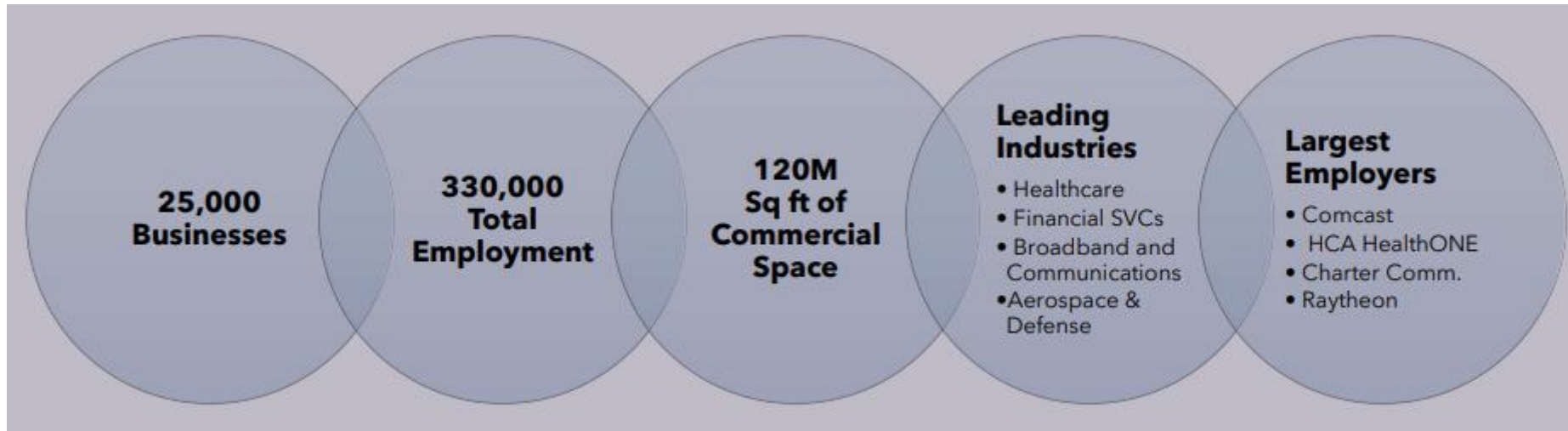
- Background
- County tools and partnerships
- Environmental scan of neighboring county structure
- Opportunities
- Next Steps



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Background

- Economic Development Overview on March 17, 2026, with Denver South and Aurora Economic Development Council (AEDC)
 - Reviewed economic development definitions and objectives
 - Arapahoe County economic snapshot



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Objectives of Economic Development

- Attract, expand, and retain primary employers
- Rebuild and/or enhance County tax base post-COVID
- Strengthen job talent pipeline
- Increase awareness of County role in supporting businesses
- Chart cohesive and collaborative approach that improves focus and reduces overlap among partners



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County Approach

- Leverage **Arapahoe/Douglas Works!** resources to support businesses and job seekers
 - Provide data on labor markets and county-specific economic profiles
 - Offer apprenticeship programs in specific business areas to address talent pipeline concerns
- Provide business personal property tax incentives on a case-by-case basis



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County Approach

- Partner with **economic development organizations** across multiple focus areas to support work throughout the county (\$350,000)
 - **Economic Development Corporations** – support primary job creation, business recruitment, commercial prospect liaison, talent pipeline
 - **Small Business Development Centers** – support entrepreneurs, offer trainings, business retention or evolution
 - **Chambers of Commerce** – support existing businesses, networking/community building opportunities
 - **Advocacy/Interest Groups** – support businesses in specific geographic areas or special interest areas, advocacy in relevant topics, networking



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Strategic Plan Alignment

Economic Resilience and Stability

- Economic Development Corporations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Small Business Development Centers
- Advocacy/Interest Groups

Workforce and Community Prosperity

- A/D Works!
- Small Business Development Centers

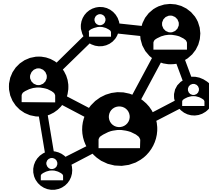


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Current Tools and Resources



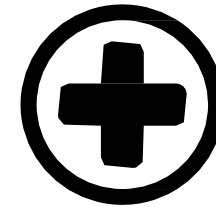
Arapahoe/
Douglas
Works!



South Metro
Enterprise
Zone



County Tax
Incentive
Program



Revitalization
Areas



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Arapahoe/Douglas Works! (A/D Works)

- A/D Works is a publicly funded workforce center offering no-cost services to businesses and job seekers to support economic mobility and job growth in the county.
- Tracks industry growth, economic trends, and employment in the area.
- Works directly with economic development partners to identify industry needs and support talent pipeline solutions.
- Serves as a resource to both prospective and current businesses.



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South Metro Enterprise Zone

- The Colorado Enterprise Zone (EZ) program was established in 1986 and is designed to stimulate economic growth and revitalization by offering state income tax credits to businesses.
- In June 2024, the South Metro Enterprise Zone expanded by adding a qualifying portion of eastern Arapahoe County.
- In 2025, municipalities and other partners convened to update the enterprise zone map and include a significantly larger portion of bordering cities and unincorporated areas.
- This larger Enterprise Zone is administered by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.



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County Tax Incentive Program

- The Board of County Commissioners offers an economic incentive for new and expanded businesses in unincorporated areas.
- This allows the County to provide a refund of business personal property taxes to the taxpayer for the creation of a new business facility or expansion of a business facility.
- To date, the County has 10 incentive agreements with six businesses and has an average of \$550,000 in refunds (avg. over eight years).



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Revitalization Areas

- Revitalization Areas are geographic areas designated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to promote revitalization of communities through expanded homeownership opportunities.
- This is determined by household incomes, homeownership rates, and FHA-insured mortgage foreclosure activity.
- Arapahoe County has several designated revitalization areas in:
 - Glendale, Littleton, Aurora, Englewood, Greenwood Village



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Regional Economic Development Structure

- Internal vs. external staffing
- Funding investment
- Location within County structure
- Available tools and resources



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Environmental Scan: County Economic Development Structure

Adams County (pop. 554,668)

- Internal – Office of Community & Economic Development
- Six dedicated ED staff
- Includes Housing, Planning/Development, Environmental, Permits/Licensing
- \$18.7M budget (\$10.9M general fund) – approx. \$6M is specifically ED
- Includes \$1M in memberships
- Provides incentives and maintains incentive policy
- Created a County Revitalization Authority (2026)
- Leverages Adams County Regional Economic Partnership (ACREP)



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Environmental Scan: County Economic Development Structure

Boulder County (pop. 328,560)

- No dedicated staff – County Administrator's Office supports
- \$180,000 (2024) – includes funding for 8-9 organizations (Boulder Economic Council provides external support)
- Unincorporated areas are largely open space
- Does not provide tax incentives or business retention/support



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Environmental Scan: County Economic Development Structure

Douglas County (pop. 399,396)

- Limited dedicated staff – leverages external support from Douglas County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC)
- \$937,500 (2025) – funding for DCEDC
- Community Development Department provides business support
 - Dedicated business coordinator in Community Development department
- Childcare Property Tax Incentive program – launched in 2026
- County Revitalization Authority, delegated to DCEDC
- Red Tape Reduction Task Force – created in Dec. 2025 to reduce regulatory burden for commercial and industrial development.



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Environmental Scan: County Economic Development Structure

Jefferson County (pop. 580,451)

- Limited staff – leverages external support from Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation (JCEDC)
 - Recently created economic development planner position to support URA contracts, metro/special districts and EDC coordination
- \$260,000 (2026)
- Emphasis on URA support
- Incentives are funneled through the JCEDC



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Environmental Scan: County Economic Development Structure

Larimer County (pop. 377,292)

- Internal – Economic & Workforce Development
 - Six dedicated staff, largely focused on workforce
- \$8.1M (primarily workforce funds)
- Economic development functions are embedded in workforce
- Maintains contract with Weld County for broader economic development
- Retains consultants to support incentive requests



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Additional Opportunities

- Incentive payment agreement structure
- Affordable housing policies/incentives
- Childcare Property Tax Incentive Program
- County Revitalization Authority for unincorporated areas
- Internal staffing
- Economic development plan or program structure
- Permitting/review process
- DRCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



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