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## **Arapahoe County adopts 2016 budget**

*Commissioners approve a \$361.7 million budget that includes a structurally balanced general fund and reflects the County's Align Arapahoe goals*

LITTLETON, CO --- The Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners have adopted a \$361.7 million budget for 2016 that reflects the County's commitment to its Align Arapahoe goals of Service First, Quality of Life and Fiscal Responsibility, despite the challenge of expenses growing faster than revenues.

The Board of County Commissioners, and members of the Executive Budget Committee, which reviews budget packages, revenues and expenses, and makes recommendations to the Commissioners for approval, focused on the following goals when developing the 2016 budget:

- Maintain a Structurally Balanced General Fund Operating Budget;
- Support the County's Total Compensation Philosophy to recognize and retain a quality workforce;
- Keep Pace with Growing Demands and Limited Revenues;
- Fund Increase Capital and Infrastructure Needs;
- Address Longer-Term Budget Issues.

As adopted, the budget includes funding for 2,034.65 employees a net increase of 41.5 employees, which includes the conversion of 20 current temporary employees at Arapahoe/Douglas Works! into full-time positions for no additional cost to the County budget.

New positions funded in 2016 include a permit technician in Public Works and Development, two detention operation technicians, three booking clerks and a body worn camera specialist for the Sheriff's Office. The Board also approved a request by the District Attorney to fund a prosecutor and investigator to address increased human trafficking activity in Arapahoe County.

Sharing the Clerk and Recorder's concern about increased activity and wait times, a majority of the Commissioners agreed to add three new positions in the 2016 budget, which along with the redeployment of four driver's license employees following the closure of the Clerk and Recorder's Altura Plaza driver's license location in north Aurora, would add a total of seven positions to help reduce customer wait times.

In addition, the Board approved \$66,000 to expand and remodel the Aurora Motor Vehicle location and provided another \$50,000 for the Clerk and Recorder to use to review business processes to determine if there are ways in which to reduce wait times.

The 2016 budget sets aside \$9.7 million for capital needs, of which, \$1.7 million will fund improvements to the intersection of Yale and Holly, \$500,000 for Iliff Avenue enhancements and another \$1.5 million for miscellaneous road, street and drainage projects.

In addition, the Commissioners approved \$930,000 for countywide technology and communication projects, \$1.04 million for public safety projects and \$2 million to fund the relocation of the Probation Division to the County's Lima Plaza campus from its current location at the Justice Center.

The budget was adopted on a 3-2 vote with Commissioners Nancy Doty, Nancy Sharpe and Nancy Jackson in support. A motion supported by Commissioners Rod Bockenfeld and Bill Holen failed on a 3-2 vote. Bockenfeld's motion called for a one-week delay in adopting the budget to find a way to add another three employees (for a total of six employees), while maintaining a structurally balanced budget, to help the Clerk and Recorder's Office reduce customer wait times in Motor Vehicle offices.

Key to the County's financial sustainability is its structurally balanced General Fund Operating Budget. Arapahoe County balances its operating budget by not budgeting beyond means to pay for ongoing expenses, and by not relying on fund balances to operate County programs and services. Instead, fund balances are used to pay for one-time items, such as capital projects, equipment and other capital assets or needs.

The budget also meets the tenets of Align Arapahoe, the County's performance framework, which was implemented in 2009, and is helping Arapahoe County evaluate its core services and programs to ensure optimal performance at minimal costs. By using performance measures and feedback to monitor progress, Align Arapahoe is helping Arapahoe County to make better program, service and budget decisions.

County revenues continue to slowly improve at a 5 percent increase from 2015; however total expenditures increased 6.6 percent, which includes funding for one-time uses.

The mill levy for 2016 collections will be 13.856 mills, which includes a temporary tax credit of 2.110 mills and falls within TABOR constitutional revenue limitations. Arapahoe County's mill levy continues to remain one of the lowest county mill levies in the Denver Metro area.

A copy of the County's budget is available for review under County News and under the Finance Department page at [www.arapahoegov.com](http://www.arapahoegov.com).

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