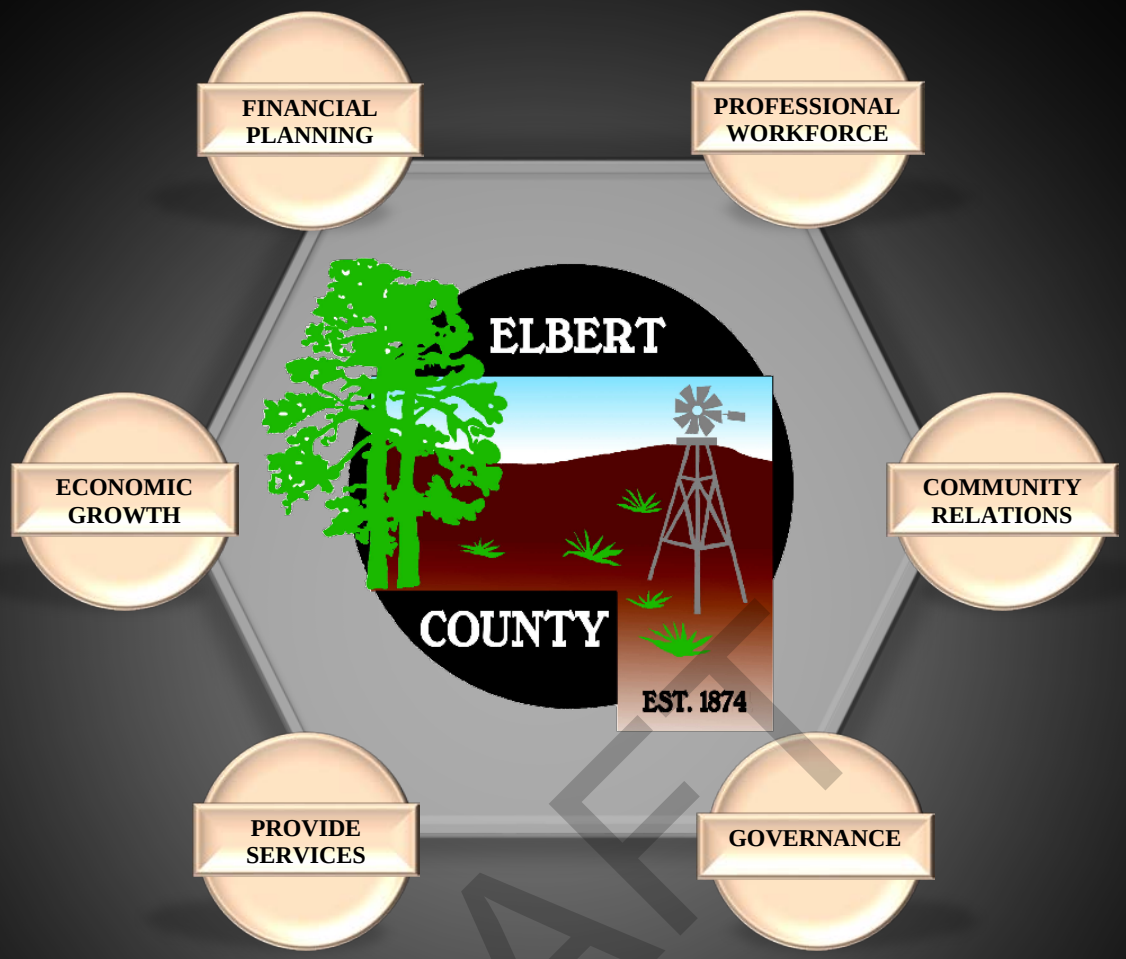

Elbert County Strategic Plan 2018-2027

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This document includes the Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Core Values, and County Strategies and Objectives

Elbert County
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10/24/2018

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Introduction

Elbert County possesses a quintessential western landscape with long-distance views of the Front Range and working agricultural lands. This area marks the end of the Front Range and the beginning of high plains grasslands. The western portion of the County is characterized by rolling hills with large stands of ponderosa pine woodlands and outcrop rock formations. Toward the east, the land flattens and transitions to farmlands and grasslands. The County is located in eastern Colorado, approximately 41 miles southeast of Denver and 91 miles west of the Kansas-Colorado border. However, the County is bordered by the fast-growing counties of Arapahoe to the north, Douglas to the west and El Paso to the south. The major towns and community growth in the western portion of the County are roughly a 25-minute drive from nearby Castle Rock and less than an hour commute to the Denver, Aurora, and Colorado Springs areas.

Mission Statement

Elbert County provides essential statutory services and supportive infrastructure to our citizens in a professional, respectful, and cost-effective manner while creating a working environment that supports their endeavors, western lifestyle and rights as individuals.

Vision Statement

Elbert County will be recognized by its citizens and employees as the best place to live, work and conduct business in Colorado through responsive, effective, transparent, and professional management.

County Core Values

- Honesty, integrity, and respect for the rights of individuals
- Quality citizen/customer service
- Respect for its western culture and history
- Clear communication and transparency
- Efficiency and fiscal responsibility
- Recognition of employee and citizen contributions
- Seeking of partnerships and collaborations
- Organizational planning for future needs
- Cooperative leadership and professional development

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A letter from the Elbert County Manager

The County government continually recognizes the dynamic challenges to provide services for the people of Elbert County. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) reviewed previous County planning documents as a base for their Strategic 10 year vision to ensure that services and initiatives lead us to a prosperous future. The planning team developed five specific goals, fourteen strategies, and twenty-four strategic objectives that provides quality services, transparent government, professional employees, and a community that is set for the future.

The BOCC, elected officials, and the County departments all collaborated on the imperatives and used feedback from town halls and other forums to develop objectives and ways to improve services. This plan is a living document that will be reviewed and revised annually based on measured evaluation criteria of each objective and progress on achieving those goals in a predetermined timeframe that is in accordance with the development of the following year's budget. The committee established a vision and mission statement as well as updated and defined its values and objectives. Values are the basic principles and beliefs of Elbert County. They guide the way we make and carry out decisions and govern the behavior of individual public servants and county government as a whole. The objectives are set goals that synchronize priorities to achieve the County's stated vision and effectively allocate limited resources and set strategic goals that can be supported by all departments and elected offices. Each one of these planning facets assists in focusing the effort of the County to meet the expectations and requirements of the community and look to its future. The plan holds the County government accountable and also provides a level of transparency to priorities and financially responsible use of funds. We are committed to improving infrastructure, services and constantly seeking new and innovative solutions to ensure we have the County you love to live and work in.

I look forward to working with everyone on this plan and welcome feedback so Elbert County continues to grow and prosper while maintaining its rural values and character.

Samuel W. Albrecht, CAE
County Manager

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Know Your County Officials

Elbert County Board of County Commissioners

CHRIS RICHARDSON

Chris.Richardson@elbertcounty-co.gov
303-621-3132

DANNY WILLCOX

Danny.Willcox@elbertcounty-co.gov
303-621-3139

GRANT THAYER

Grant.Thayer@elbertcounty-co.gov
303-621-3114

Elbert County Treasurer/Public Trustee
Rick Pettitt 303-621-3120

Elbert County Clerk & Recorder
Dallas Schroeder 303-621-3116

Elbert County Assessor
Billie Mills 303-621-3101

Elbert County Sheriff
Shayne Heap 303-621-2027

Elbert County Coroner
Mike Graeff 303-646-5599

Elbert County Surveyor
Keith Westfall 303-243-0038

Elbert County Manager
Sam Albrecht 303-621-3106

Elbert County Directors
Justin Klassen, Director of Administration 303-621-3100
Rory Hale, Director of Public Works 303-621-3157
Christina Stanton, Director of Community Development Services 303-621-3136
Jen Grote, Director of Information Technology 303-621-6149
Jerri Spear, Director of Health and Human Services 303-621-3149
Alex Jakubowski, Director of Emergency Management 303-621-6131

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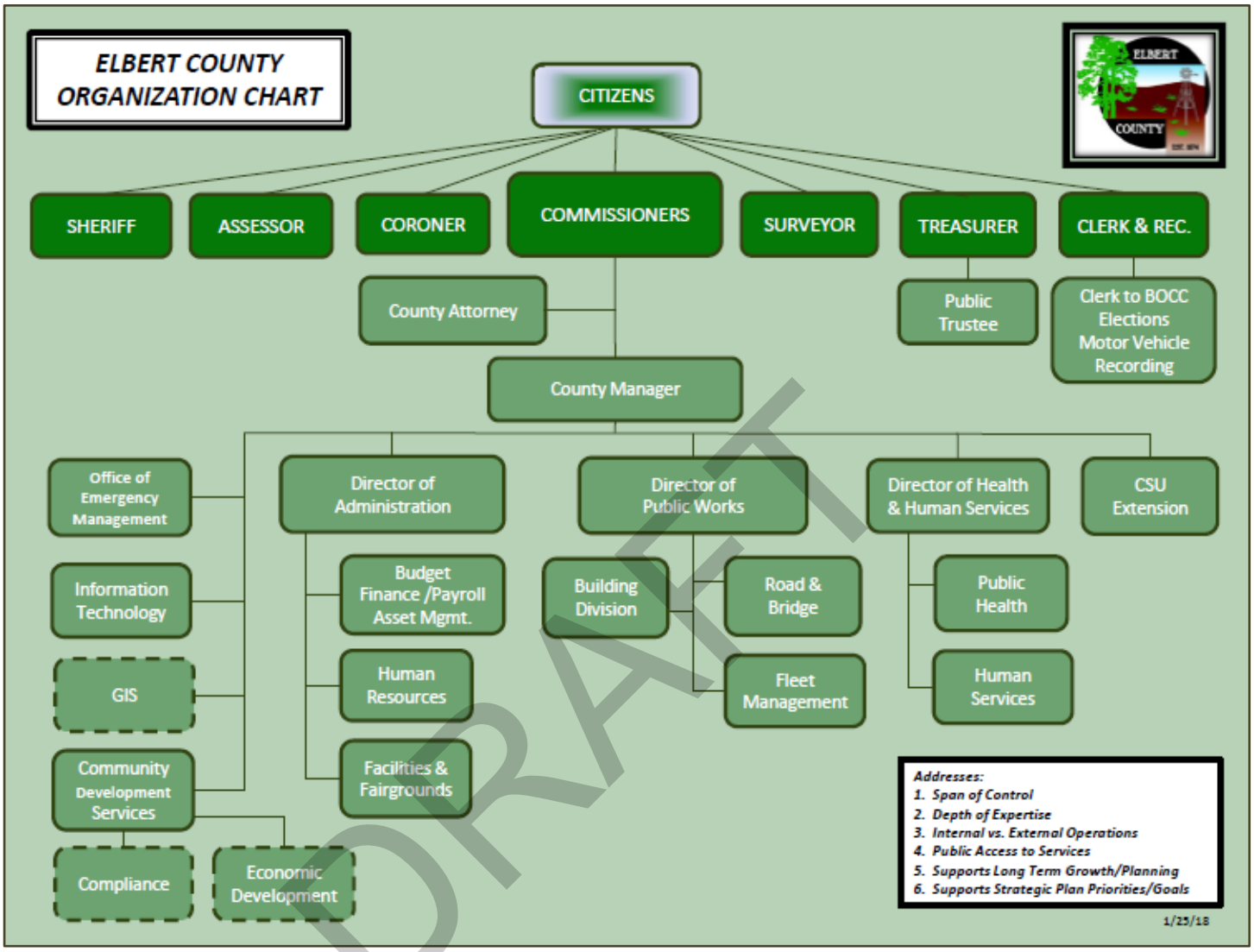
Elbert County Organizational Chart



2018 Elbert County Budget

Elbert County's budget is important to the success of the strategic plan. Leadership will have to prioritize resources (personnel, revenue and capital) in order to not only continue providing current levels of service, but integrate goals, strategies, and strategic objectives.

The $28,000,000 annual budget is complex. The largest revenue streams are taxes, state/federal programs, and charges for services. The largest expenditure categories are public works, public safety, and human services. The following tables and charts provide a visual of this information.

County staff takes the stewardship of public funds seriously and will manage those resources to best serve the citizens and move this plan forward.

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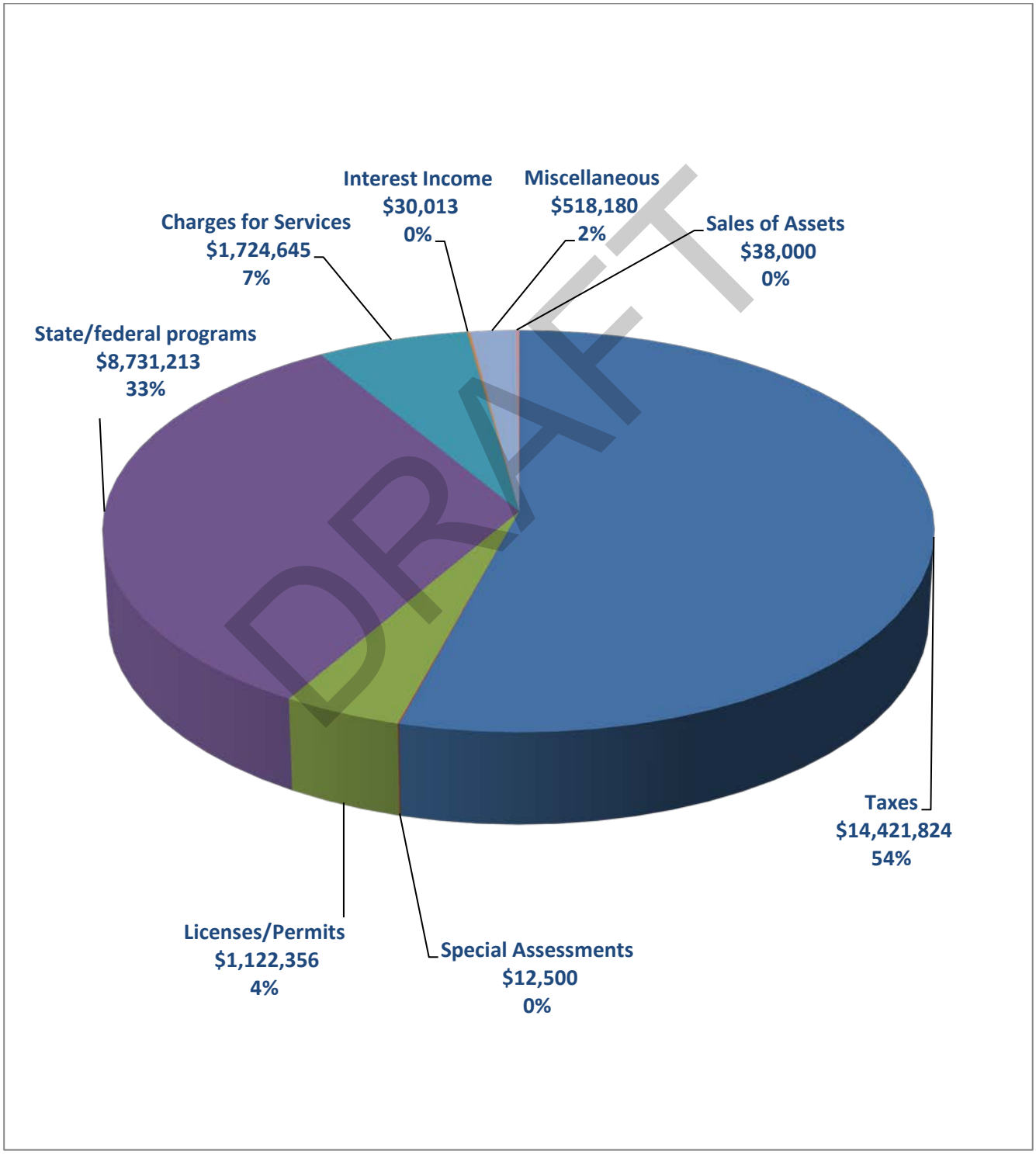
ELBERT COUNTY, COLORADO
COUNTY TOTAL SUMMARY
2018 BUDGET
For the Years Ended and Ending December 31

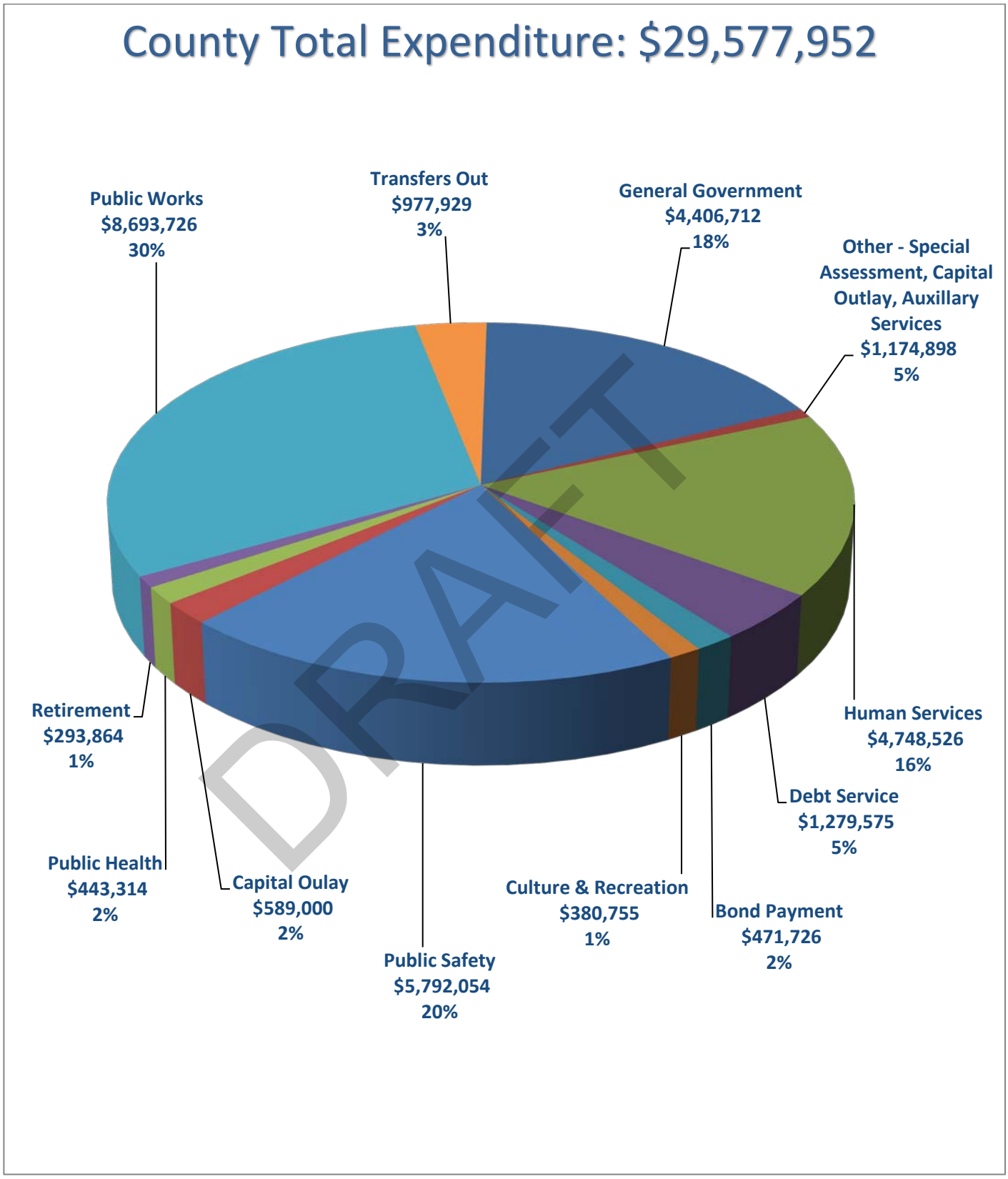
	AUDITED FINANCIALS 2016	AUDITED FINANCIALS 2017	ADOPTED BUDGET 2018
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE	$ 7,978,627	$ 8,542,531	$ 16,205,781
Total revenues	31,045,705	32,933,947	26,756,949
Total transfers in	874,908	1,184,161	998,356
TOTAL REVENUES & TRANSFERS IN	31,920,613	34,118,108	27,755,305
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	39,899,241	42,660,639	43,961,086
Total expenditures	30,481,802	26,139,196	28,315,212
Total transfers out	874,908	1,184,161	1,242,740
Total expenditures and transfers out requiring appropriation	31,356,710	27,323,357	29,557,952
ENDING BALANCE	**$ 8,542,531**	**$ 15,337,282**	**$ 14,403,134**
Committed/Restricted Funds	480,000	4,180,000	5,083,370
ENDING BALANCE WITH COMMITTED/RESTRICTED FUNDS	**$ 8,062,531**	**$ 11,157,282**	**$ 9,319,764**

2018 Elbert County Source of Funds

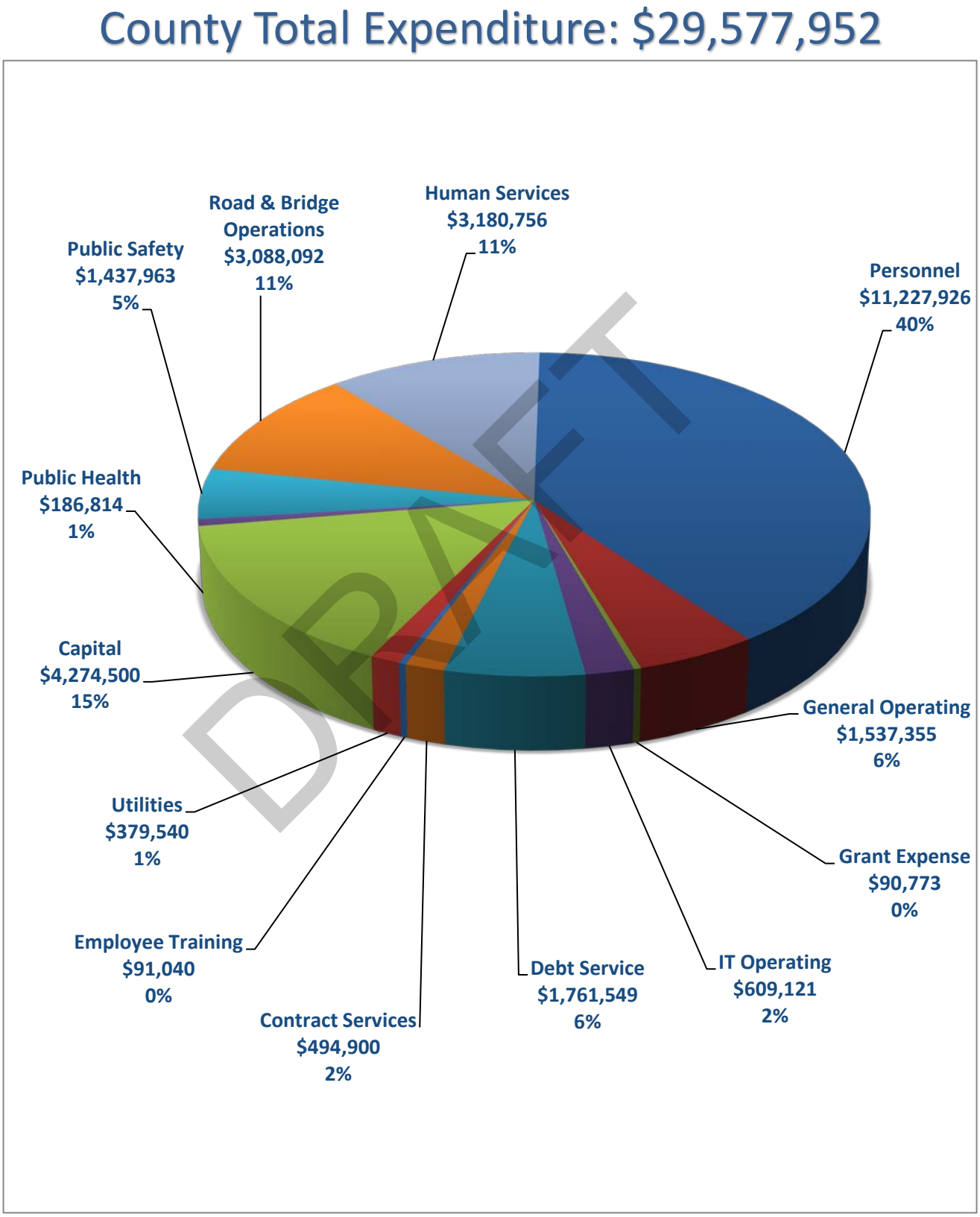
County Total Revenue & Transfers In: $27,755,305



2018 Elbert County Budget Expenditure Categories



2018 Elbert County Budget Expense by Type



The Strategic Plan Process

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Purpose of the Strategic Plan

Strategic thinking is used to assess the County's current services and charts a course to maintain and/or improve desired services for citizens, with the results being a documented strategic plan. The Strategic Plan helps us make decisions on allocating human and capital resources to achieve the identified goals, strategies and objectives. The plan encourages collaborations, partnerships and creative thought among County leaders, partners, stakeholders, municipalities and citizens. Finally, the plan clearly communicates the County's intended direction over the next five to ten years. Regular updates to the plan will keep it current.

Structure of the Strategic Plan

The strategic plan is comprised of multiple County resources, surveys, and documentation. We are utilizing feedback from staff, elected officials and the citizens to execute a streamlined plan to include transparency, a future planning road-map and provide the County a way to measure significant achievements and measure these successes against the plan.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

Research included a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) survey that was sent to all staff and key organizational volunteers. Key findings of the SWOT include:

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Strengths

Elbert County's small workforce allows for a more cohesive and customer centric team. Employees are dedicated to their positions, the County, and the citizens. Leadership is there when needed.

Weaknesses

Internal and external communication can, and should be improved. Concerns with respect to benefits, salaries, raises, and retirement were voiced by employees. Being short staffed was also raised as a concern and is expected where leadership is being responsible as stewards of taxpayer funding.

Opportunities

Growth was listed as an opportunity and is expected to bring more businesses and more housing choices for Elbert County residents. Growth should also come with increased County revenue for more services. More population should also increase the pool to recruit qualified personnel as County employment grows.

Threats

Anti-growth angst is a concern when balancing revenue with increased cost of baseline services and potential to increase services. Another threat mentioned was that if population grows, we must expect to see increased demands from the public for increases in services – and how do we maintain services if there is an economic downturn. Finally, in order to maintain and recruit talent, we must benchmark ourselves against our neighboring counties.

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Citizen Engagement Survey

In addition to the traditional SWOT completed with staff and volunteers, the Board of County Commissioners authorized a County Wide Citizen Engagement Survey to provide additional information to drive the strategic direction of the County. The online survey was modeled from other county surveys and a flyer was mailed (with tax statements) to every property tax payer in the county (approximately 12,000) with a link to the survey. In addition, the link was posted on social media and announced at Board of County Commissioners meetings.

The survey was completed by 608 respondents. The following issues were identified as important to the respondents:

- Roads and bridges
- Communication
- Transparency
- Water
- Housing Development
- Rural feel/values
- Business development

In addition, 70% of the respondents were satisfied with County employees when conducting County business, 22% were dissatisfied, and 8% reported no contact. The County should continue to survey citizens in order to address not only the satisfaction rate, but the key issues stated above.

How is the Strategic Plan Used?

The plan will be used by County administration and all departments when developing annual work plans. It addresses the five specific goals, fourteen strategies, and twenty-four strategic objectives which align with the County's vision, mission, and goals.

Based on the twenty-four strategic objectives the County Manager will further identify short-range, mid-range, and long-range tasks. These tasks will be organized to allow staff to accurately prioritize department workloads.

Progress within the plan will be regularly updated to the community. Future policy and budget recommendations will be tied back to the plan.

Strategic Plan Update Process

Updates will be driven by the success of annual work plans as well as changes in the internal and external environment that need to be considered. Citizen engagement surveys may be conducted to gather additional information from the public. The County Manager will initiate the review, update, and coordination efforts and recommend changes to the Board of County Commissioners.

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Strategic Plan Terminology

Mission Statement – An overarching statement of the organization's overall purpose and the methods used to accomplish the mission.

Vision Statement – An inspirational statement of the future aspirations of the County.

Core Values – Collective beliefs and behaviors that guide actions.

Goals – Statements of intended results that will be the focus of strategic efforts. Goals are developed by the elected officials.

Strategies – Broad definitions on how a specific goal will be accomplished. Strategies are normally reviewed and updated every five years. The County Manager, in coordination with the elected officials, design strategies.

Strategic Objectives – Specific long-range actions to accomplish strategies that will include detailed plans, specific time frames, and measureable outcomes. The County Manager establishes strategic objectives with Directors.

Strategic Priorities – Specific short-range tasks designed to meet strategic objectives. Strategic Priorities are not covered within this plan, but rather are managed by directors and/or department managers.

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Elbert County Goals

Based on the core values of Elbert County, there are five overarching goals. The goals are written to describe the ways in which the County strives to achieve the Vision Statement. Goals are not prescriptive; instead, they provide a roadmap for decision making.

Goal 1 – Maintain and promote a financially sustainable County government that is transparent and effective.

Goal 2 – Ensure a qualified, trained, and efficient workforce.

Goal 3 – Deliver plans, updates, and status to citizens via multiple channels while ensuring open two-way communications.

Goal 4 – Plan for continuity of government in case of disaster, infrastructure failure, or economic impacts.

Goal 5 – Support growth and economic activity in the County.

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Elbert County Strategies

Once Elbert County clearly identified goals for success, fifteen strategies to ensure the County is able to meet all goals were developed. The strategies describe the County will achieve specific goals. Strategies further define the roadmap to success.

Strategy 1.A: To promote and practice a culture of transparency in all aspects of the County government.
Strategy 1.B: To develop a financial process that encompasses all aspects of governmental budget development and budget execution.
Strategy 1.C: To develop long rang financial plans for the County.

Strategy 2.A: To design and maintain an efficient and sustainable organizational structure that provides manageable oversight and effective span of control.
Strategy 2.B: To develop talent management plans.

Strategy 3.A: To promote and practice professionalism and respectful interaction with all County employees, elected officials, and citizens of Elbert County.
Strategy 3.B: To provide our citizenry access to services that are both statutorily authorized and sustainable at anticipated resource levels.
Strategy 3.C: To develop communications strategies that support the needs of citizens.
Strategy 3.D: To develop and maintain planning processes in all areas that define objectives in the short, mid, and long-range time frames.

Strategy 4.A: To develop a committed approach to emergency management planning.
Strategy 4.B: To develop risk management plans.
Strategy 4.C: To grow a stability fund, and to review and consider diversification of revenue streams.

Strategy 5.A: To promote and support economic development with the focus on financial influence and strategically designed growth, that respects and protects private property rights without excessive government intrusion.
Strategy 5.B: To build and maintain infrastructure that supports current and anticipated future needs.
Strategy 5.C: To empower the residents of Elbert County to be productive, and encourage responsible commercial, residential, and agricultural development in the County.

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Elbert County Strategic Objectives

These objectives, when fully met, ensure that we successfully accomplish our mission and can achieve our vision. They govern the "what" we prioritize and how we accomplish our mission.

Strategic Objective 1.A.1: Improve distribution of agendas, background documents, and minutes of public meetings.

Strategic Objective 1.B.1: Provide for a sustainable level of service regardless of year-to-year revenue fluctuations.

Strategic Objective 1.C.1: Determine the costs of providing for the long-term needs of the county.

Strategic Objective 1.C.2: Generate revenues that meet the projected long-term needs of the county.

Strategic Objective 2.A.1: Identify and recruit talent that will achieve the mission, vision and goals of the County.

Strategic Objective 2.A.2: Maintain a strong executive leadership team.

Strategic Objective 2.A.3: Participate in regional and functional cooperative bodies that affect our ability to serve the citizens of Elbert County.

Strategic Objective 2.B.1: Provide professional development that supports achieving the mission, vision and goals of the County.

Strategic Objective 2.B.2: Retain and reward talent that will achieve the mission, vision and goals of the County.

Strategic Objective 3.A.1: Provide customer service and professionalism training.

Strategic Objective 3.B.1: Simplify communicating for those choosing to do business with Elbert County.

Strategic Objective 3.C.1: Ensure that Elbert County government is aware of needs of the citizens we serve.

Strategic Objective 3.C.2: Ensure that our citizens have easy access to information regarding Elbert County Government.

Strategic Objective 3.D.1: Integrate and execute long-range planning in all aspects of the County governance.

Strategic Objective 4.A.1: Establish and maintain strong policy governance.

Strategic Objective 4.A.2: Maintain succession plans for all offices and departments.

Strategic Objective 4.B.1: Annually poll directors and elected officials for top risks to their operations. Develop risk mitigation plans as needed.

Strategic Objective 4.C.1: Maintain and build appropriate stability fund.

Strategic Objective 4.C.2: Grow/diversify revenue streams.

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Strategic Objective 5.A.1: Reduce the time, uncertainty, and cost for applicants requesting land use decisions.

Strategic Objective 5.A.2: Increase benefit to County from currently identified economic impact zones and high-traffic corridors.

Strategic Objective 5.B.1: Provide adequate infrastructure to support County operations.

Strategic Objective 5.B.2: Provide GIS mapping services to all County offices, departments, and requesting special districts.

Strategic Objective 5.B.3: Improve conditions of roadways in Elbert County.

Strategic Objective 5.B.4: Maintain a regularly updated Comprehensive Plan to guide future land use decisions.

Strategic Objective 5.C.1: Increase opportunity for in-county private employment.

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Planning Assumptions (2017-2026)

Purpose: This page contains the assumptions necessary to develop estimates used to quantify specific measures associated with the county's strategic objectives. The basis for each assumption is indicated. These assumptions shall be validated and/or adjusted annually during the budget development process.

Growth:

1. Total Population

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
27,674	29,274	31,174	32,968	34,657	36,341	38,018	39,689	41,349	42,998

Source: State Demographer- TABLE III-C- 1. Preliminary Population Forecasts for Colorado Counties, 2000-2050

2. Household Estimates

a. Current/per capita:

	Total Population	Household Population	Persons Per Household	Total Units	Occupied Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate
COUNTY	24,694	24,621	2.75	9,245	8,965	280	3.03
Elizabeth	1,412	1,412	2.78	534	508	26	4.87
Kiowa	744	709	2.45	321	289	32	9.97
Simla	638	608	2.66	266	229	37	13.91
Unincorp.	21,900	21,892	2.76	8,124	7,939	185	2.28

Source: State Demographer - Population and Household Estimates for Colorado Counties and Municipalities, 2015

b. Future / Total Homes:

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
10,559	11,249	11,942	12,608	13,250	13,877	14,508	15,135	15,763	16,391
Increase	+690	+693	+666	+642	+627	+631	+627	+628	+628

Source: State Demographer- Household Projections - County

Economy:

Housing Prices: Assuming sales prices will track with historical cyclical trends.

Sales & Use Tax Collections: Assuming that revenue from these sources will be proportional to population.

Denver-Metro CPI:

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
2.5%	2.8%	2.9%	2.6%	2.5%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%

Source: State Demographer- State Economic Variables

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Closing

Strategic thinking, and therefore strategic planning, are critical to an organization's long term success. While it is much easier to focus on day-to-day tasks, looking forward into time is much harder to do. We believe that we have crafted a plan that accomplishes that, and allows for updates as we move forward.

- Expect transparency in our operations and future planning
- Expect annual updates and status reports that show our progress
- Expect us to reach out to citizens to find out how we are doing, and how to better communicate and plan for the future

The Elbert County government will strive to meet our mission and move the County toward the vision!

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