

2022

STRATEGIC PLAN



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Photos courtesy of Jon Rose



Jefferson County Board of Commissioners

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Message from the County Manager

Dear Jefferson County Residents:

The past year has presented us with significant challenges relating to physical and mental health, community connectedness, financial stability, racial equity, and environmental sustainability. In many ways, these challenges have helped us enhance the services we provide and more deeply connect with our community. I am incredibly proud of the resiliency our Jeffco employees and residents have shown, and I am eager to introduce and execute the Jefferson County Strategic Plan.

The Jefferson County Strategic Plan sets us on a course for the future, with a five-year roadmap of aspiring yet achievable goals. Focusing on implementing plans and projects will allow the county to advance our strategic outcomes, recover and stabilize, and listen to and act upon community voices.

Over the past year, the county has met with the Board of County Commissioners, elected and appointed officials, Jeffco staff members, external stakeholders, and Jeffco residents to discuss strategic planning initiatives. From these meetings, we learned about the community's needs, concerns, hopes, and goals. Based on the feedback we received, we revised our strategic objectives and related action items to meet the expectations of our stakeholders.

Such focus areas include:

- + Balanced, responsible growth and development
- + Better channels for communicating with government service providers
- + Improved quality of life through equal access to affordable housing, mental health support, and expanded public transportation routes
- + Support for all Jeffco residents, especially those who have historically been discriminated against due to age, race, and ability
- + Protection of our natural resources, especially through forest and wildfire management and mitigation

The recent challenges we have faced have shown us that we are stronger together and will continue working to create a community that is healthy and safe for all its members. Keep fighting the good fight!

Respectfully,

Donald Davis

Jefferson County Manager



Vision
To be a county government that provides equitable, innovative, efficient, and quality service to a thriving and safe community.

Mission
Jefferson County is dedicated to promoting safety, health, and well-being for all members of our community and to ensuring the responsible stewardship of its resources

Values
Responsiveness, Integrity, Collaboration, Diversity and Inclusion, Accountability

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK





Strategic Planning Process

Jefferson County initiated a strategic plan update in 2021.

The process used to develop the plan was designed to ensure:

- + A shared vision of the outcomes that the county sought to create. Organizations driven by clear purposes and shared values have a greater capacity to succeed than those that are not.
- + A collective understanding of the available resources, the environment, and the principles upon which strategic goals will be based.
- + Acceptance of the direction and urgency of the strategic plan, which will be integrated into the way the county is operated on a day-to-day basis.

To achieve these conditions for success, Jefferson County's strategic planning process involved input from a broad group of internal and external stakeholders.

This input was used to develop the county's seven outcome areas, as well as the associated goals and outcome measures for implementation over the next five years.

Jefferson County is centrally located in the State of Colorado, with a population of more than 580,000 as of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 Population Estimates Program.

Introduction

The county is part of the quickly growing Denver metro area, which is home to approximately 2.9 million people and the headquarters for many corporations, including Coors Brewing Company, Frontier Airlines, DISH Network, and Western Union. The region also boasts branch locations for dozens of large corporations, such as Lockheed-Martin, United Airlines, Kroger Co., and Visa Inc. In 2019, Forbes ranked the Denver metro area as the fourth best place in the United States for business and careers.

Jefferson County was established in 1859, yet not officially founded until 1861 when President Buchanan signed an act formally recognizing the Territory of Colorado. Today, the county encompasses approximately 774 square miles along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. The county has plenty of open space, parks, and trails that provide residents and visitors space to enjoy the proximity to the mountains through a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. And with such a long history in Colorado, Jefferson County has many museums and historic sites including the Colorado Railroad Museum, famed Buffalo Bill's Grave, and Dinosaur Ridge, where visitors can view dinosaur tracks and fossils. In addition to recreational and educational opportunities, the County boasts many attractions for residents and visitors, such as Red Rocks Amphitheater, Olde Town Arvada, Lakeside Amusement Park, Genesee Park Bison Overlook, and Bandimere Speedway.



A visual facilitator captured discussion themes relating to each outcome area during the virtual community summits.

As of June 2021, the county has an unemployment rate of 5.8%, as compared to the State-wide rate of 6.2% and the nation-wide rate of 5.9%. The median household income in the county is \$82,986, as of the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, and 7.2% of the community falls below the poverty line. According to Salary.com, the cost of living in Jefferson County is 19.7% higher than the national average.

There are twelve incorporated municipalities wholly or partially located in the county, including

the Cities of Arvada, Edgewater, Golden, Lakewood, Littleton, Westminster, Wheat Ridge, and the Towns of Bow Mar, Lakeside, Morrison, Mountain View, and Superior. Unincorporated areas within the county are home to one-third of Jeffco's total population. Many of the unincorporated areas are mountainous, such as the communities of Evergreen and Conifer.

Jefferson County government is one of the largest employers within the county, in addition to Jefferson County Schools, Denver

Federal Center, Lockheed-Martin, and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). Jeffco residents are generally well-educated, with more than 45% of the adult population over the age of 25 possessing at least a bachelor's degree. There are many higher learning institutions nearby Jefferson County as well as a number located within the county: Red Rocks Community College, Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design, Colorado Christian University, and state-supported Colorado School of Mines.

Jeffco by the Numbers

According to the US Census

582,881

Population estimate
July 1, 2019

4TH

Most populated of
64 counties in the state

245,121

Housing units
2019 estimate

Parks and Open Space

56,000

Acres preserved

252

Trail miles

27

Parks

Road and Bridge maintains more than

2,900

Paved lane miles

700

Gravel roadway
land miles

Land Area

774

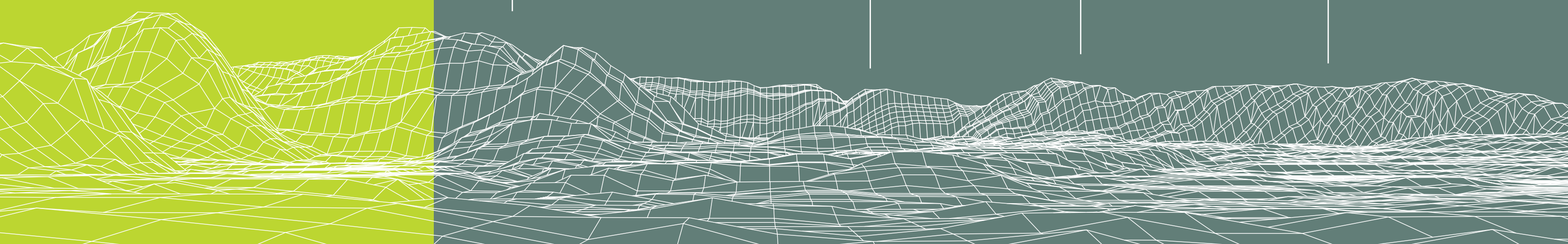
Square miles

557

Square miles
of mountain area

217

Square miles
of plains area





Vision

Jefferson County seeks to be a county government that provides equitable, innovative, efficient, and quality service to a thriving and safe community.

Mission

Jefferson County is dedicated to promoting safety, health, and well-being for all members of our community and to ensuring the responsible stewardship of its resources.

Values

Responsiveness, Integrity, Collaboration, Diversity and Inclusion, and Accountability.

Strategic Outcome Areas



Create Safe, Healthy and Thriving Communities

Jefferson County communities are diverse and active, with access to multi-faceted services – people experience a high quality of life, are safe in their neighborhoods and are connected to a variety of amenities.

Enhance Inclusive Community Engagement

Jefferson County recognizes, supports, and enhances diversity in all forms, and intentionally seeks inclusive approaches to ensure equitable access and engaged communities around issues that matter to them.

Ensure Responsible Growth and Development

Jefferson County supports balanced growth that enhances quality of life and diverse employment opportunities, is affordable for those who live, work, and play in the county, and aligns with the long-range community planning efforts.

Protect Natural Resources and Our Environment

Jefferson County promotes environmental stewardship and open spaces by working to ensure access and responsible use, mitigating natural hazards and preserving resources for future generations.

Strengthen Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Jefferson County is continuously focused on enhancing infrastructure resiliency, creating versatile spaces and amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy and ensuring ease of movement within the county.

Operate as an Employer of Choice

Jefferson County government is invested in attracting, developing, and retaining a highly motivated, engaged, skilled, and service focused workforce that reflects the county's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Provide Innovative, Equitable and Effective Services

Jefferson County government incorporates new approaches and best practices to continuously improve responsive communication and service delivery.



Create Safe, Healthy, Thriving Communities

Jefferson County communities are diverse and active, with access to multi-faceted services – people experience a high quality of life, are safe in their neighborhoods and are connected to a variety of amenities.

Jefferson County’s focus is to continue to create equitable and accessible programs that meet community needs, increase resources to support community safety, and partner with community organizations to develop and enhance projects, programs and initiatives that lead to a higher quality of life for Jefferson County residents and visitors.

The county has numerous activities underway that support this outcome area. For example, to improve access and awareness, Jefferson County is working to enhance interpretation and translation services. The county is also leveraging the work and recommendations of the Inclusion Diversity Equity Accessibility (IDEA) Task Force to understand equitable access needs in the community.

As far as its existing programs related to improving public safety in the County, Jeffco participates in several community engagement initiatives, including (among others) National Night Out, which promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make neighborhoods safer, and Safety in Faith, which is an annual summit started in August of 2015 to improve public safety partnerships with local houses of worship, regardless of denomination.

Similarly, existing initiatives will be leveraged over the coming years to support community-driven partnerships and programs to enhance quality of life. For example, Age-Friendly Jefferson County is focused on developing and implementing strategies to create inclusive, livable communities through sustainable partnerships and integrated services. The county is also working to support affordable housing strategies and programs for individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as efforts to increase food access.

The success of these existing programs and initiatives will be built on over the next several years through the following goals to ensure that Jeffco continues to create safe, healthy, and thriving communities.

Goals

Create equitable access and awareness of programs that improve the total well-being of our community.

Increase the level of public trust and utilization of emergency and support services to improve overall community safety.

Empower our community to create opportunities to enhance the quality of life.



Enhance Inclusive Community Engagement

Jefferson County recognizes, supports, and enhances diversity in all forms, and intentionally seeks inclusive approaches to ensure equitable access and engaged communities around issues that matter to them.



Part of creating safe, healthy, and thriving communities and achieving Jeffco's other strategic outcomes will rely on cultivating and promoting avenues that enhance inclusive community engagement. While this has long been a priority for the county, moving forward, Jeffco will focus specifically on increasing the effectiveness and inclusiveness of community engagement to understand and respond to the community's diverse needs and priorities.

One area of community engagement that was enhanced to ensure Jeffco was able to meet the communication needs of the community during the pandemic was its online presence and support. The website was

updated to increase the ease of finding the most searched for information and new resources were added, including a new video. Additionally, by providing appointment and chat services that connected community members to departments and elected offices, residents had more opportunities to engage. The county also increased participation through the Engagement Jeffco community e-newsletter.

The goals listed to the right reflect the county's focus on understanding community needs and priorities and will help ensure that intentionally inclusive approaches will be leveraged to ensure equitable access for community members.

Goals

Develop methods for community engagement that meet people where they are while being responsive to community needs and priorities.

Improve effectiveness of community engagement and partnerships with enhanced inclusion of all people.





Ensure Responsible Growth and Development

Jefferson County supports balanced growth that enhances quality of life and diverse employment opportunities, is affordable for those who live, work, and play in the county, and aligns with the long-range community planning efforts.

Jefferson County represents a diverse mix of urban and rural development, as well as a variety of community perspectives relating to how the county's built environment should look in the future. Like many communities in Colorado, affordable and accessible housing is increasingly scarce, and the inventory of natural hazards that the county must be prepared to address is significant.

To gauge interest in growth and development, Jeffco regularly updates its long-range community plans, most notably the Comprehensive Master Plan,

which serves as a guide for making land use decisions, such as rezoning, special use and site approval cases. The county is actively working to ensure that the input and participation received during those efforts is as representative of community viewpoints as possible.

Many county departments contribute to affordable housing and sustainable economic development, particularly Community Development. Community Development's mission is to foster sustainable, inclusive communities through collaboration with partners to reduce poverty and enhance economic development by providing access to housing and social services resulting in self-sufficiency for its most vulnerable populations. Over the next several years, the county will continue to leverage existing city partnerships within Jefferson County to support and increase avenues to ensure affordable housing availability. These partnerships have also proved beneficial for coordinating economic development efforts.



The goals listed below enhance and build on the work that is already underway and help to ensure that responsible growth and development remains a cornerstone of the community.

Goals

Balance development with sustainability and preservation while being mindful of community desires, resources and natural hazards in all communities.

Improve and increase availability of quality, accessible housing that is affordable for all incomes.

Promote and facilitate sustainable economic development.



Protect Natural Resources and Our Environment

Jefferson County promotes environmental stewardship and open spaces by working to ensure access and responsible use, mitigating natural hazards and preserving resources for future generations.

To date, Jefferson County has preserved more than 56,000 acres of parks and open spaces, thus supporting the unique ecosystems that result from the County's location at the intersection of the Great Plains and the base of the Rocky Mountain foothills. Recognizing the value of mitigating natural disasters and ensuring that open spaces remain pristine and accessible for generations to come, Jeffco has committed to protecting natural resources and the environment.

With regard to emergency mitigation strategies for natural disasters, the county already has several efforts underway, including the development of a climate action plan through a partnership between the Jefferson County Sustainability Commission and the Jefferson County Public Health department. The county also has a recently updated hazard mitigation plan and a wildland fire protection plan, which guide Jeffco's responses to natural disasters, and will be invaluable tools as the county looks to partner with other agencies to expand efforts. The recently adopted Jeffco Trails Plan aspires to provide county residents access to a trail or greenspace within a 10-minute walk in the plains and 10-minute drive in the mountain areas. The plan is the result of a collaborative effort that included multiple partner organizations and extensive community engagement to identify trail opportunities and implementation strategies that increase safety, access, and connectivity of Jefferson County trails or greenspaces.

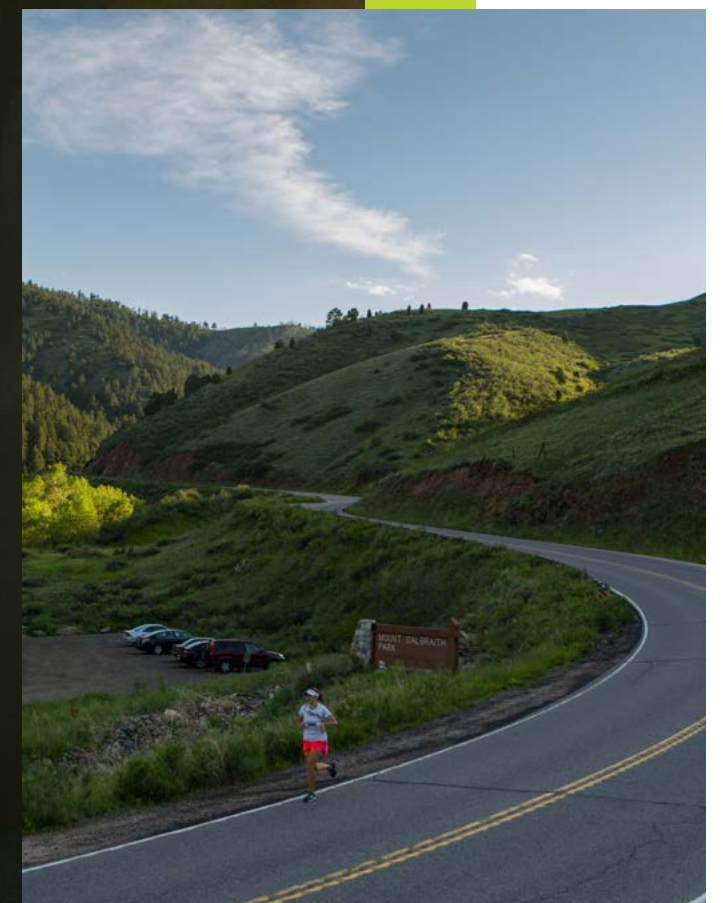
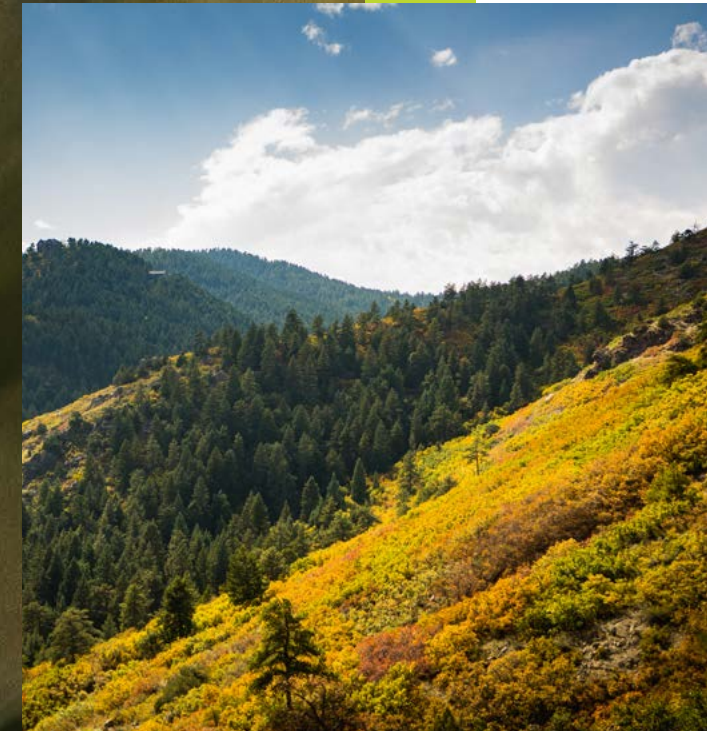
The goals listed below capture and enhance the work already underway and help to ensure that the county will continue to protect natural resources and the environment.

Goals

Partner with community agencies to develop emergency mitigation strategies for natural disasters.

Promote the use and development of renewable, cost effective and sustainable alternatives to protect and improve our environment.

Ensure a variety of access points to outdoor spaces available for everyone.





Strengthen Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Jefferson County is continuously focused on enhancing infrastructure resiliency, creating versatile spaces and amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy and ensuring ease of movement within the county.

Like most local government entities, Jeffco owns, operates, and maintains a considerable inventory of public facilities and infrastructure. This outcome area is focused on ensuring that existing facilities and infrastructure are well-maintained, expanding accessibility and options for sustainable modes of travel, and ensuring a positive user experience for assets and infrastructure.

Success in this outcome area requires Jeffco to continue to build on existing programs and practices, including the county's preventative maintenance program for county buildings and infrastructure (e.g., asphalt, concrete, and culverts) and incorporating the results of the county's infrastructure condition assessment into its capital improvement planning. Implementing recommendations from several plans, including the county's bicycle master plan and pedestrian master plan, will support expansion of sustainable modes of travel. Jeffco also has several initiatives underway relating to improving the cost effectiveness, efficiency, and reliability of its assets and infrastructure, including an update to the facilities master plan resulting from changes in use due to COVID-19.

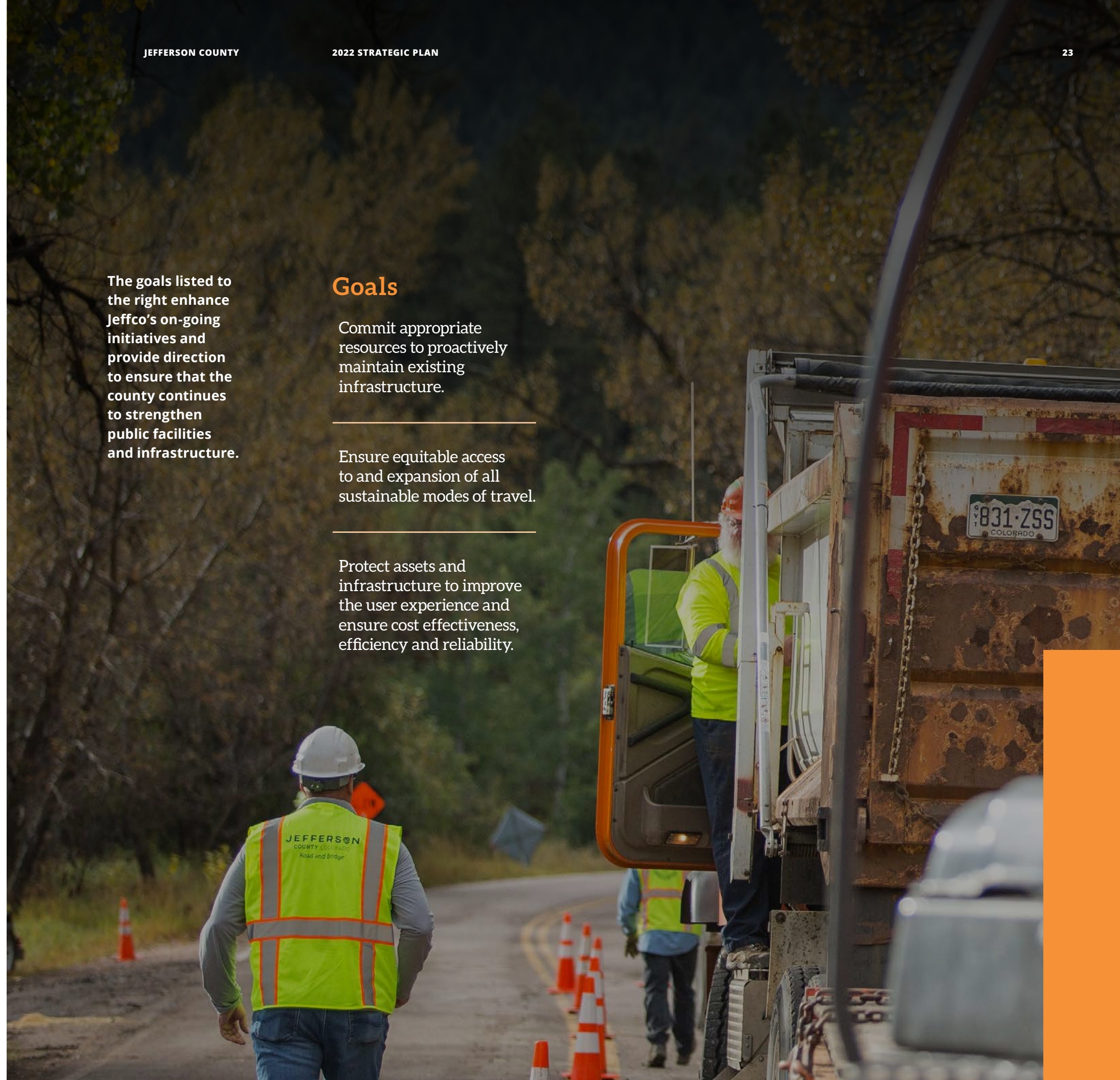
The goals listed to the right enhance Jeffco's on-going initiatives and provide direction to ensure that the county continues to strengthen public facilities and infrastructure.

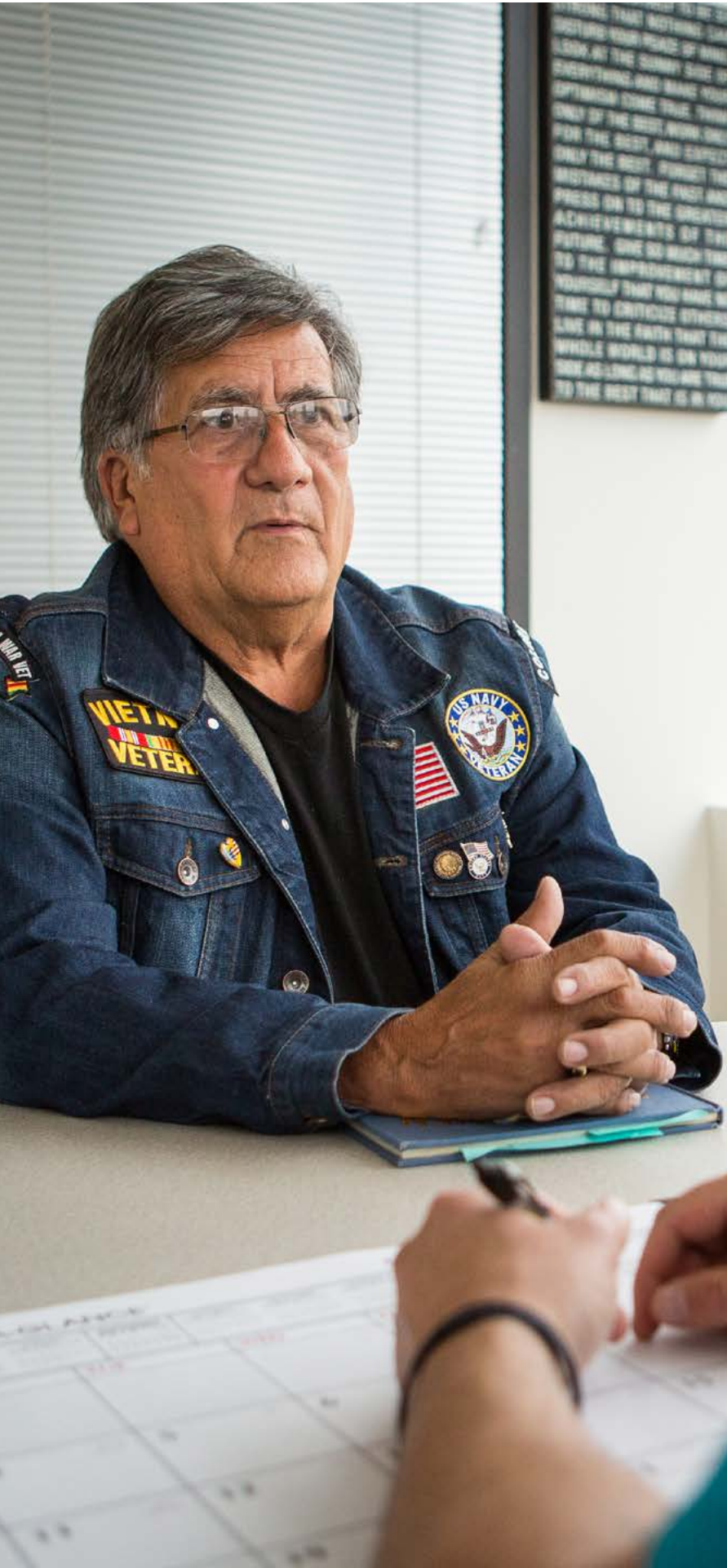
Goals

Commit appropriate resources to proactively maintain existing infrastructure.

Ensure equitable access to and expansion of all sustainable modes of travel.

Protect assets and infrastructure to improve the user experience and ensure cost effectiveness, efficiency and reliability.





Operate as an Employer of Choice

Jefferson County government is invested in attracting, developing, and retaining a highly motivated, engaged, skilled, and service focused workforce that reflects the county's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.



Implementation of this strategic plan, and all other county activities, relies on the talents and dedication of Jeffco's service-focused workforce. Ensuring that the workforce is successfully supported requires deliberate recruitment and retention initiatives and a competitive compensation package.

Jefferson County recognizes and values its employees and has numerous activities underway that support further work in this strategic outcome area. Existing activities include regular surveys regarding the employee experience, leadership development training for managers and supervisors, county-wide online training opportunities, promoting Jeffco's unique benefits as an employer and regularly assessing the market to ensure competitive compensation packages.

The new goals listed below will bolster employee recruitment, development, and retention, while ensuring that the county is able to operate as an employer of choice.

Goals

Create a comprehensive strategy to attract and retain a diverse workforce that is informed by staff input.

Provide a competitive and equitable total rewards package including compensation, benefits, wellness, recognition programs, and training & development.

Develop an inclusive employer of choice brand strategy that appeals to a diverse candidate pool.



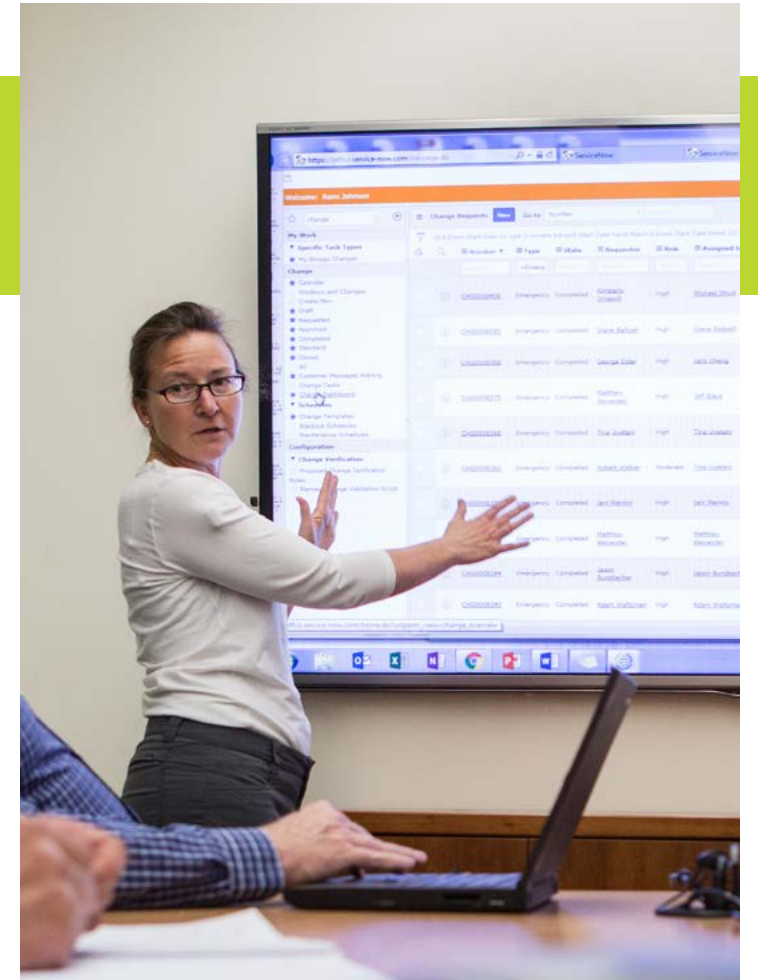
Provide Innovative, Equitable, and Effective Services

Jefferson County is continuously focused on enhancing infrastructure resiliency, creating versatile spaces and amenities for residents and visitors to enjoy and ensuring ease of movement within the county.

Jeffco's organizational vision is to be a county government that provides equitable, innovative, efficient, and quality service to a thriving and safe community, which relies directly on success in this outcome area. For this planning cycle, the county is focused on improving efficiency and effectiveness through technology, community input and programs that promote equity in all county services.

Success in this area will require the county to continue to focus on recruiting, developing, and retaining employees with the data analysis skills necessary to inform programmatic decision-making, as well as improving the connectivity and integration of the county's departmental websites. Many services and community events have become more accessible due to technology changes resulting from COVID-19, including public meetings and increased online engagement. Jeffco will also continue to assess incorporation of equity within the County organization, and work to incorporate the community recommendations generated by the IDEA Task Force.

The goals listed below provide additional specificity for the county's future direction related to this outcome area, and help to ensure that providing innovative, equitable and effective services remain a cornerstone of the community.



Goals

Utilize technology, data and process improvements to guide decisions and enhance service delivery.

Implement new technology opportunities to improve access based on value, equity and input from the community.

Ensure an equity lens is applied to all county services, programs and decisions that allows access and participation for everyone.



Metrics

Create Safe, Healthy and Thriving Communities

- + **Create equitable access and awareness of programs that improve the total well-being of our community.**
 - Number of ways programs are accessible and communicated
 - Total program attendance per capita
 - Improvement on identified needs in the Community Health Needs Assessment
 - Progress towards the completion of the Language Access Plan
- + **Increase the level of public trust and utilization of emergency and support services to improve overall community safety.**
 - Number of injury/fatal crashes
 - Average response time to police Priority 1 calls
 - Percent of residents who indicate that they feel safe in their neighborhood
- + **Empower our community to create opportunities to enhance the quality of life.**
 - Number of visitors for cultural institutions/libraries per capita
 - Number of programs and services created to enhance the quality-of-life
 - High quality of life and variety of amenities

Protect Natural Resources and Our Environment

- + **Partner with community agencies to develop implement emergency mitigation strategies around natural disasters.**
 - Number of forest fuel reduction educational contacts
 - Number of acres treated in highest risk areas
 - Total volume of SLASH collected annually
- + **Promote the use and development of renewable, cost effective and sustainable alternatives to protect and improve our environment.**
 - Outdoor Air Quality Index
 - Water quality
 - Jefferson County's carbon footprint and current offsets
 - Progress towards a net zero carbon footprint
- + **Ensure a variety of access points to outdoor spaces available for everyone.**
 - Percent of residents with access points to outdoor spaces within a 10-minute walk (in plains areas) and within a 20-minute drive (in the mountains)

Strengthen Public Facilities and Infrastructure

- + **Commit appropriate resources to proactively maintain existing infrastructure.**
 - Infrastructure maintenance spending as a percent of total expenditures
 - Allocation of revenue to spending
 - Accuracy of budget to actual performance
 - Amount of unfunded transportation and facilities infrastructure
- + **Ensure equitable access to and expansion of all sustainable modes of travel.**
 - Miles of bicycle paths/lanes per capita
 - Amount of charging stations accessible within Jefferson County
- + **Increasing access and use to amenities and versatile spaces.**
 - Utilization percentage for libraries, fairgrounds, and Boettcher's Mansion
 - Utilization percentage for libraries, hours available and square feet
 - Minutes of drive time to a library

Enhance Inclusive Community Engagement

- + **Develop methods for community engagement that meet people where they are while being responsive to community needs and priorities.**
 - Percent of events, programs, and communications offered in languages other than English
 - Number of communications sent to residents
- + **Improve effectiveness of community engagement and partnerships with enhanced inclusion of all people.**
 - Number of attendees and interactions at community events, meetings, and programs, whether in person or virtually
 - Expanded diversity of volunteer boards and commissions
 - Establish and define where/frequency to communicate to minority or women owned businesses to increase awareness for participating in the procurement process

Operate as Employer of Choice

- + **Attract and retain a diverse workforce through a comprehensive strategy that is informed by staff input.**
 - Attrition rate
 - Retention rate
 - Employer net promoter score
- + **Provide a competitive and equitable total rewards package including compensation, benefits, wellness, recognition programs, and training & development.**
 - Compa-Ratio
 - Employer net promoter score
- + **Attract a diverse candidate pool through an inclusive employer of choice brand strategy.**
 - Employer net promoter score
 - Diversity Chart

Ensure Responsible Growth and Development

- + **Balance development with sustainability and preservation while being mindful of community desires, resources, and natural hazards in all communities.**
 - Ratio of residential to commercial property
 - Commercial vacancy rates
- + **Improve and increase availability of quality, accessible housing that is affordable and attainable for all incomes.**
 - Affordable housing inventory
 - Reduction in chronic homelessness
 - Progress towards the completion of the housing plan
- + **Promote and facilitate sustainable economic development.**
 - Poverty and unemployment rate in Jefferson County
 - Number of residents working in Jefferson County

Provide Innovative, Equitable, and Effective Services

- + **Utilize technology, data and process improvements to guide decisions and enhance service delivery.**
 - Percent of Jefferson County services
 - Site Improve rating
 - Number of website visits, satisfaction, and complaints
- + **Implement new technology opportunities to improve access based on value, equity and input from the community.**
 - Summary of success stories of new technology tools
- + **Ensure an equity lens is applied to all county services, programs and decisions that allows access and participation for everyone.**
 - Percent of policies and procedures reviewed



Jeffco has committed to creating and implementing an inclusive strategic planning process for the community. To date, this has included:

Interviews and work sessions with Jefferson County's Board of County Commissioners

Interviews and work sessions with the County Manager and Department leadership

An employee survey with more than 600 respondents

A work session with the county's elected and appointed officials

Four virtual summits with stakeholders and the community

Implementation meetings with members of the leadership team around each strategic outcome