

COMMUNITY SERVICES

With a population increasing in size, age, and diversity, the effective provision of community services becomes more important to maintaining the quality of life and the sustainability of the community. Community services are activities that administer, monitor, and support programs and projects that promote the viability of a diverse and maturing community.

Community services focus on housing issues, special districts, cultural and historic resources, and economic development. Effective delivery of these resources is ensured through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and economic and demographic analysis. The residents of the community then benefit from the provision of human services, transportation services, community education and support.



HOUSING

Community services goals, objectives and policies work to provide a variety of housing choices to meet the needs of a diversifying population. A diverse housing stock can accommodate people of all lifestyles and life stages, from young adults to families and seniors.

The County has several ways to promote housing choice. The most significant is the Douglas County Housing Partnership (DCHP). The DCHP was formed between businesses and government to address the lack of affordable housing for people who work in the area.

SECTION 6

Private Activity Bonds (PAB) have been used by Douglas County to support affordable housing projects. These bonds are issued by local government on behalf of private developers working on projects that create public benefit. Because the bonds are federally tax-exempt, the project's financing costs are reduced, making the project more affordable and reducing the risk to the private developer.

The County has implemented a policy of seeking a commitment from developers in large Planned Development zonings for affordable housing units. Developers provide cash-in-lieu of housing units to the County. This money is directed to the Douglas County Housing Partnership.

SPECIAL DISTRICTS

In Douglas County, the provision of public infrastructure for new development and the operations and maintenance of this infrastructure in existing developments has largely been financed by special districts. Special districts are quasi-municipal entities created under State statute to provide specifically identified services, and to construct and maintain facilities and infrastructure necessary to support development.

Special district services include, but are not limited to, fire protection, mosquito control, parks and recreation, safety protection, sanitation, solid waste disposal, street improvement, television relay and translation, transportation, and water. Because special districts provide much of the infrastructure and municipal services to residents of unincorporated areas, the County has an interest in ensuring that these districts meet the best interests of its residents.

Typically new districts are created when there are limited or no services provided in the area. Special districts issue tax-exempt or revenue bonds to finance the construction of public improvements, making districts an economical and effective way to finance improvements. Property owners within the district pay to retire the district's general obligation debt through their property taxes.

CULTURAL RESOURCES AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

An important component of Douglas County's sense of place is its historic legacy. This legacy is evident in our heritage of agriculture, mining, industry, and transportation and in our cultural resources. Cultural resources include historic roads, buildings, structures, sites, districts, landscapes, archeological sites, as well as cultural practices.

One way the County has chosen to preserve and protect its heritage and cultural resources is through the Douglas County Historic Preservation Board. The Board volunteers are charged with identifying, preserving, and communicating the history of Douglas County. They have also worked to establish the Douglas County Landmark Program.



To avoid the loss of resources, the Historic Preservation Board acts as a referral agency for land-use applications and demolition permits on structures 50-years old or older. With the involvement of the Historic Preservation Board in these decisions, the County ensures that the cultural resources are adequately documented, preserved, and/or protected.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development can be defined as any strategy or program that aids in the growth of the economy. A growing and diverse economy creates jobs, reduces unemployment, and provides a larger variety of goods and services. The biggest benefit of a robust economy for a local government is the increased tax revenue.

Local government depends on these funds to provide services to residents and businesses.

A common strategy of many economic development programs is attracting and retaining businesses. Unlike municipalities in Colorado, counties are limited in the kinds of financial incentives they can offer businesses. Recruitment and attraction is more about actively marketing the County, its quality of life, and advantages as a place to do business.

Douglas County provides economic and demographic data analysis to assist businesses with their market research and encourage them to locate in the County. Data analysis also helps locate resources and determine the availability of land, buildings, or commercial spaces.

Some economic development approaches include supporting existing businesses by creating a nurturing environment (economic gardening), focusing efforts on certain geographic areas with special conditions, and collaborating with the other economic development organizations and agencies in the County and larger metropolitan area.

ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Accurate and reliable information is important for effective decision-making. Communities need economic and demographic analysis to help them understand the present and plan for the future. The Douglas County Community Development Department compiles and analyzes County, State, and Federal data, and prepares reports and maps.

Population estimates are determined by the amount and type of housing built every year. Population projections depend on knowing the plans and zoning for land throughout the County. The Planning Services Division of Community Development uses the analysis for long-range planning and development review.

Housing market characteristics are also tracked through the analysis of housing costs, rents, sale prices, and foreclosures in conjunction with the age, size, and income-levels of the population. This is necessary to achieve a

timely response to community needs, such as supporting attainable housing and/or a range of housing types.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a Federally funded program administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Douglas County became eligible to apply for the grant as an entitlement community in 2004. The national objectives of the grant program are to benefit low- and moderate-income persons, aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight, and to address other community development needs that present a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community. Douglas County identifies its priority needs in the Consolidated Plan, a 5-year strategic plan.



HUMAN AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Social service programs are provided at the County level, but are funded primarily by the Federal government and the Colorado Department of Human Services. Some of the programs Douglas County Human Services provides are child and adult protection, temporary financial assistance, child care assistance, and other supportive services for qualified residents. Human Services determines eligibility for services, administers programs, and provides statutorily authorized services to specified children and families.

Tri-County Health Department is the local public health department which is partially funded by, and serves, Douglas County. The range of services includes disease control and prevention, nursing, nutrition, vital records, emergency preparedness and environmental health.

In order to respond to an increasing demand from special needs populations for additional services and housing, the Department of Human Services completed the *Long Range Plan to Include Adults with Disabilities*. This document is incorporated as a reference document for the Comprehensive Master Plan.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The primary means of transportation in Douglas County is by private automobile. Although Douglas County is part of the seven-county Metro Denver area, it has many rural areas and small towns that limit cost-effective transit services. Due to the number of public and private transit service organizations, coordination is crucial to ensure programs will appropriately serve transit riders.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

Promoting available community services ensures the public has access to all education and service opportunities. The County acts as a resource for, and provides support to, all community stakeholders.

GOAL 6-1

SUPPORT HOUSING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE POPULATIONS.

OBJECTIVE 6-1A

ASSURE A VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES.

POLICY 6-1A.1

Encourage a variety of housing that fits different lifestyles and needs.

OBJECTIVE 6-1B

SUPPORT HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF SENIORS.

POLICY 6-1B.1

Encourage a variety of housing suitable for seniors that serves a range of needs from independent living to dependent living.

POLICY 6-1B.2

Encourage the use of private activity bonds (PABs) for the construction of senior housing.

OBJECTIVE 6-1C

ENCOURAGE HOUSING THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.

POLICY 6-1C.1

Remove barriers to, and promote the availability of housing for people with disabilities.

POLICY 6-1C.2

Give priority in the allocation of PABs to projects that include housing for people with disabilities.

**OBJECTIVE 6-1D**

PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF ATTAINABLE HOUSING.

POLICY 6-1D.1

Locate attainable housing in proximity to employment, transportation, and services.

POLICY 6-1D.2

Support measures, such as deed restrictions and community land trusts, which maintain the affordability of attainable housing on a long-term basis.

POLICY 6-1D.3

Support, in cooperation with the Douglas County Housing Partnership, the acceptance and use of cash-in-lieu of attainable housing units.

POLICY 6-1D.4

Coordinate with the municipalities, State and Federal agencies, and for profit and non-profit organizations to provide attainable housing in Douglas County.

POLICY 6-1D.5

Support attainable housing in municipalities and use the County's allocation of PABs, when appropriate, to assist in this effort.

POLICY 6-1D.6

Encourage public and private land donations and price reductions for attainable housing.

POLICY 6-1D.7

Maximize the use of State, Federal, and private funding sources to increase opportunities to develop attainable housing.

POLICY 6-1D.8

Identify an appropriate clearinghouse for information regarding attainable housing.

OBJECTIVE 6-1E

CREATE INCENTIVES FOR, AND REMOVE BARRIERS TO, ATTAINABLE HOUSING.

POLICY 6-1E.1

Support the reduction of development fees for projects that include attainable housing.

POLICY 6-1E.2

Give projects that include attainable housing priority within the planning review process.

POLICY 6-1E.3

Promote flexible standards to encourage attainable housing.

GOAL 6-2

PROMOTE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SPECIAL DISTRICTS.

OBJECTIVE 6-2A

ENSURE SPECIAL DISTRICTS ARE FINANCIALLY SOUND.

POLICY 6-2A.1

Require a detailed, independent evaluation of all special district financing plans.

OBJECTIVE 6-2B

ENSURE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF COUNTY RESIDENTS.

POLICY 6-2B.1

Ensure district activities and operations are consistent with the service plan.

**GOAL 6-3**

PRESERVE DOUGLAS COUNTY'S CULTURAL RESOURCES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

OBJECTIVE 6-3A

CREATE A PRESERVATION PROGRAM THAT INCLUDES METHODS AND POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES.

POLICY 6-3A.1

Encourage community efforts to plan for the preservation of its cultural resources.

POLICY 6-3A.2

Identify and support the preservation of sites and districts with historic, prehistoric, or cultural significance.

POLICY 6-3A.3

Incorporate historical and cultural resources into development plans, such as focal points.

POLICY 6-3A.4

Cooperate with the Historic Preservation Board and other preservation-related organizations to provide historic preservation education and outreach programs to the public.

GOAL 6-4

FOSTER A ROBUST AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY.

OBJECTIVE 6-4A

ESTABLISH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT BUSINESSES OF ALL SIZES.

POLICY 6-4A.1

Provide incentives to attract and retain businesses.

POLICY 6-4A.2

Work with private and public sector resources to offer financing for small and start-up businesses, including micro-businesses.

POLICY 6-4A.3

Provide direct support for small and start-up businesses.

POLICY 6-4A.4

Support economic gardening programs throughout Douglas County to create jobs and support entrepreneurs.

POLICY 6-4A.5

Support recreation and tourism efforts.

GOAL 6-5

ENSURE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE RESOURCES, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE.

OBJECTIVE 6-5A

USE THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM AS A RESOURCE FOR OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES.

POLICY 6-5A.1

Direct the use of CDBG funds to community services thru the Consolidated Plan.

**OBJECTIVE 6-5B**

CONTINUALLY SEEK EFFICIENT, RELIABLE, AND ACCURATE WAYS TO MEET THE DATA ANALYSIS NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

POLICY 6-5B.1

Identify changing community needs.

POLICY 6-5B.2

Assure the methods, data sources, and tools of data analysis maintain quality and accuracy.

OBJECTIVE 6-5C

ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION, TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE.

POLICY 6-5C.1

Create a comprehensive transportation services system.

POLICY 6-5C.2

Support efforts within Douglas County to provide transportation services.

OBJECTIVE 6-5D

ENABLE THE DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY TO EFFECTIVELY ACCESS SERVICES AND INFORMATION.

POLICY 6-5D.1

Raise awareness of community services available in Douglas County by ensuring information about services is readily available.

POLICY 6-5D.2

Enhance outreach and technical assistance efforts.