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## 2018 County Conversations

### **Arapahoe County seeks feedback from citizens, community leaders on future of Colorado's first county as growth, demographics change**

LITTLETON, CO --- During the next several months, Arapahoe County will hold a series of opportunities for residents, elected officials and community and economic development leaders to provide input into the future of Colorado's third largest county.

Arapahoe County will hold a series of focus groups, surveys and community engagement sessions as a means to reach a broad segment of the population that will gauge citizen awareness about County services and to gain insight into what citizens want to see in the future.

"Since 2000, Arapahoe County grew 32 percent – making our county the second largest in the metro area," said Commissioner Jeff Baker, who serves as Board Chair. "If growth continues at this rapid pace, Arapahoe County will become the largest county in the metro area with a population of more than 800,000 by 2030, surpassing the population of the City and County of Denver.

*County Conversations* is an initiative to get feedback from citizens about Arapahoe County services. The effort, which began in late June, will involve formal and informal focus groups, online polls, telephone town hall meetings, telephone surveys and citizen polls between now and November.

The idea to conduct *County Conversations* was an outcome of the County's Annual Leadership Workshop, which was held Feb. 27-28, 2018.

Every year, the County's Leadership Team (commissioners, elected officials, department directors and deputies) meet to discuss the County's present and future needs, as well as how to best address them.

This year, the County's Leadership Team expanded upon the work of the Long Range Budget Committee, which was created in 2016 by the Board of County Commissioners to take an in-depth look at County budget trends and issues, especially as the County's infrastructure (roads, jail, courts, facilities) continues to age.

The Long Range Budget Committee, which consists of community and County leaders, identified four areas that need to be addressed to best serve the citizens of Arapahoe County. The areas identified include:

- Public Safety (law enforcement patrol services and the detention center – booking and release area)
- Transportation (construction and maintenance)

- Judicial Center (courts)
- Ongoing Services (building maintenance, capital improvements, digital services and growth in general operations).

Leading *County Conversations* is Ehlers and Associates, a municipal advisory firm specializing in developing solutions to challenges facing states, counties, cities, school and special districts.

Ehlers will hold a series of outreach opportunities that will involve residents, business leaders and civic groups and will focus on gauging viewpoints and knowledge of County services, infrastructure and revenue.

Results of the research will guide discussions at the County's 2019 Leadership Workshop.

For more information about County Conversations and how you can provide feedback into County services and share your thoughts for what your county government should do to address future demographic and population changes, please visit <https://www.arapahoegov.com/1946/County-Conversations> or email [conversation@arapahoegov.com](mailto:conversation@arapahoegov.com) for more information.

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