

# Vision Framework & Initial Goals

The Vision Framework is a narrative that illustrates what the County can achieve following the adoption of the Master Plan. The narrative is intended to be ambitious and inspirational, depicting the El Paso County community's collective desires, and serving as the foundation for the Plan's goals, objectives, and recommendations.

## Vision Framework

Projected to grow to nearly one million people by 2050, an increase of nearly 250,000, El Paso County will need to accommodate growth in specific areas of the County while maintaining the special character, unique places, and environmental and natural amenities that have helped define the region. Responsible development is necessary and will ensure that key areas grow appropriately without the unnecessary extension of infrastructure and services into valued natural areas and parts of the County that cannot support development. This will establish strategic areas of the County as complete communities with the necessary housing, commercial options, and public services to allow current and future residents to live comfortably.

To build off recent regional economic and employment successes, the County will utilize its existing assets to attract new potential businesses and employees. The continued advancement of established industries like healthcare and the availability of developable land in principal locations will help engage new businesses and capitalize on emerging markets. Regional and national access through the interstate highway system and Colorado Springs Airport will play a role in anchoring new businesses development and expansion while El Paso's regional attractiveness and national prominence as a hub for outdoor recreation will continue to buoy employee recruitment. As key land owners and employers, continued coordination with the military installations will also be imperative to the County's growth and success.

Connectivity will be critical to future prosperity in El Paso County. Strengthening east-west connections and creating alternative north-south routes will be imperative to improving travel within the County. While cars will continue to be the primary mode of transportation throughout El Paso County, greater emphasis should be placed on developing a complete transportation network with well-maintained infrastructure that supports cars as well as transit, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

The County's natural beauty is one of its key assets that will continue to attract new residents and visitors to experience life in El Paso County. It is one of the few places in the country where a person can experience so many different natural environments and biological diversity – from forests and prairieland, to deserts and mountains – in such close proximity. These natural areas need to be protected and preserved for future generations. Each of these environments provides its own unique opportunities for both passive and active outdoor recreation. The County's diverse environs also provide the backdrop for an excellent network of well-maintained parks, multiuse trails, and open spaces that can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Intergovernmental collaboration coupled with partnerships with external agencies will maintain first-rate community facilities and provide high-quality services to all parts of the County. Coordination and collaboration will be critical to the management of the County's precious natural resources and ensuring their longevity for future populations. A focus for utility services will be on establishing growth areas to prioritize future development in order to equitably manage water access and availability.

Through the development and use of the Master Plan, El Paso County will continue to grow as one of the most desirable places on the Front Range and in the State. It will be a place where any resident has the opportunity to enjoy the lifestyle they choose, from urban to suburban to rural and everything in between. It will be a healthy and sustainable community whose natural features, recreational amenities, strong employment opportunities, and diverse housing options provide all residents with a high quality of life.

## Preliminary Goals

### Existing Development & Land Use

- Direct new development in a manner that ensures compatibility with established neighborhoods, commercial districts, and employment centers and aligns with infrastructure capacity.
- Limit leapfrog and promote context-sensitive design to minimize negative impacts of development on established neighborhoods and districts.
- Provide a range of development types to support a variety of lifestyles throughout El Paso County.

### Economic Development

- Continue to leverage the County's diverse employment base and desirable location to recruit new businesses to key locations along Interstate 25 and other major roadways to help strengthen the overall economy.
- Encourage the development of commercial districts in underserved areas of the County to better meet needs of the local residents and businesses.
- Capitalize on the strength of growing sectors such as the healthcare industry to spur the development of secondary and tertiary supporting business; recruit, train, and retain a skilled workforce; and bolster the overall economy.
- Utilize the airport opportunity zones to support new business development adjacent to the Colorado Springs Airport.
- Work with the military installations to support their efforts to foster new development and create new jobs.

### Housing & Communities

- Promote development of a mix of housing types to accommodate growth in areas of the County that have been appropriately identified for higher-density development.
- Utilize lower-density housing types to help preserve the character of rural areas where more-intense development is not appropriate or feasible.
- Locate affordable and senior housing options in parts of the County that have convenient access to necessary goods and services through alternative transportation options.

### Transportation & Mobility

- Establish a complete transportation network that connects all areas of the County to one another, emphasizing east-west routes.
- Improve and expand the roadway network to reduce traffic congestion and allow drivers to safely and efficiently travel throughout the County.
- Establish multimodal transportation systems to provide opportunities for biking and walking in all areas of El Paso County.
- Foster higher density, transit-supportive development where appropriate and coordinate with appropriate agencies such as Mountain Metro Transit and Calhan Connection to expand public transportation options to underserved areas of the County.
- Coordinate and expand efforts of all public airports in El Paso County to increase regional and national access for business development and tourism.

### Community Facilities & Infrastructure

- Improve partnerships with local and regional organizations and agencies to provide high-quality facilities and infrastructure to enhance the quality of life in El Paso County.

- Manage growth and development in appropriate areas to ensure viable access to water for all existing and future County residents.
- Expand the use of best management practices to protect water quality, conserve water, minimize impacts of flooding, and beautify the El Paso County community.

#### Military Base Compatibility

- Maintain the good working relationships between the County and the existing military installations to help support the mutual success and growth of one another, emphasizing compatibility of future development adjacent to the bases.
- Coordinate with the military installations to provide space for their expansion as-needed.

#### Recreation & Tourism

- Continue to provide a high-quality outdoor recreation network within the County as a key amenity for residents and visitors.
- Explore projects, programs, and initiatives for enhancing tourism opportunities in unincorporated areas of the County to increase tourism spending and create employment opportunities.

#### Community Health & Sustainability

- Continue to support the goals of the 2018 Community Health Improvement Plan through coordinated and collaborative efforts with other County or local organizations.
- Ensure that all residents, regardless of income or geographic location in the County, have access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food.
- Consider the environmental impacts related to natural resource conservation, air quality, water quality, wildlife protection, and waste management during any planning process.

#### Resiliency & Hazard Mitigation

- Prioritize hazard mitigation and increase resiliency to natural hazards, specifically wildfires and flooding, as growth and development occurs.
- Continue to coordinate communication and activity among Office of Emergency Management (OEM), emergency service providers, and military installations for improved responses to natural hazards and disasters.

# MPAC Visioning Workshop

## El Paso County

### Suggested Topics

Land Use & Development

Economic Development

Housing & Communities

Transportation & Mobility

Community Facilities & Infrastructure

Military Base Compatibility

Recreation & Tourism

Community Healthy & Sustainability

Resiliency & Hazard Mitigation



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