



CHAPTER 3: A FRAMEWORK FOR POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Vision for Clear Creek County helps establish the overarching aspirations for the region in the long-term. It states:

“Improve upon the existing quality of life in Clear Creek County by supporting the development of a diverse economy, protecting natural and cultural resources, becoming a more resilient community, encouraging recreation, and recognizing the County’s distinct areas.”

A Vision statement can not advance on its own. It needs a structure from which it can guide the policies of the County. This “Policy Framework” is that structure. Building from the key themes discovered during the public engagement process and recognizing the existing baseline conditions described in Chapter 2, the Policy Framework articulates a series of statements that, in combination, express the objectives the County believes are needed to realize its vision. These statements should be read as **“Clear Creek County Shall....”** to emphasize the importance they play in helping move the Vision forward.

A representative icons for each of the key themes described in Chapter 1 is provided adjacent to each statement to reinforce what public inputs most influenced it. Many of the statements address several themes (Quality of Life, Cultural Resources, etc.). Some are more specific to a single key theme. In combination, these statements provide the platform on which more detailed goals and strategies can be created to guide future policy decisions within the County.



“Clear Creek County Shall...”



STATEMENT 1: Seek a greater diversity of economic activity within the County.

The County will use a multi-pronged approach to both engage and support local businesses as well as to attract diverse and viable companies and organizations that provide high quality employment. The County will use its key assets in this effort: high quality of life, rural mountain lifestyle, proximity to the Denver metropolitan area, mining legacy and infrastructure, recreation, and tourism.



STATEMENT 2: Enable and encourage communities within Clear Creek County to actively participate in planning for their future.

The County will support the development of subarea plans that help refine and reflect County-wide objectives, while retaining the individual character and values of the distinct areas within it. Independent and creative approaches will be encouraged in these pursuits.



STATEMENT 3: Ensure suitability and compatibility with environmental characteristics and community character of Clear Creek County when considering land use change and development.



The County will consider resources, including but not limited to, open space, water resources, wildlife, ecosystems, viewsheds, natural hazards, and infrastructure, when assessing the impact of development and land use decisions.



STATEMENT 4: Identify and protect lands of high ecological value, scenic quality, or historic importance.



Through both smart land use planning and open space acquisition, the County shall analyze which lands meet these criteria, and align their planning processes accordingly.

KEY THEMES



Quality of Life



Resiliency



Recreation



Built Environment and Land Use



Mining



Distinct Areas



Economy



Natural Environment



Cultural Resources

“Clear Creek County Shall...”



STATEMENT 5: Promote the concentration of residential and commercial development into established municipalities and activity centers in order to preserve rural lands and to efficiently use County resources.

Through coordinated land use planning, the County will encourage growth in designated areas where services either exist or can be provided with modest effort and cost.



STATEMENT 6: Recognize and support endeavors in the arts, culture, recreation and tourism.

The County will use an all-inclusive approach to branding, identification, and communication so that residents identify with and visitors recognize the assets and identity of Clear Creek County.



STATEMENT 7: Consider recreation as an important contributor to residents’ quality of life and a part of a balanced regional economy.

The County will acknowledge recreation in economic development efforts, recognizing their tie to each other. The County will understand its unique assets and build recreational opportunities around them. The County will pursue partnerships focusing on recreation with entities such as schools, municipalities, the private sector, state agencies, CCMRD, USFS, and the OSC..



STATEMENT 8: Continue to preserve and protect mineral resources for the benefit of future generations.

The County recognizes the short term challenge of the Henderson Mine closure but will continue to think in terms of long-term opportunities and building upon its mining heritage. The County will actively promote reuse options for the Henderson mine that do not preclude future mining efforts.



“Clear Creek County Shall...”



STATEMENT 9: Explore how local and regional initiatives within the County can improve access to health care services.

The County will work to develop “home-grown” options that support access to health care services while also looking to partner with regional, state, and federal agencies. The County will pursue financially sustainable strategies that will improve health care access in the long-term, not quick fixes that do not hold up over time.



STATEMENT 10: Endorse transportation infrastructure that is multi-modal in nature and enhances existing communities as well as their access to the rest of the region.

The County will look for opportunities to integrate pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities where appropriate, enabling residents to access jobs and services without reliance on personal automobiles. The County will address the challenges of the I-70 corridor, while embracing opportunities the highway presents. The County will explore partnerships with neighboring counties as well as local, regional, and state agencies to provide transit service between Clear Creek County and neighboring counties in the pursuit of improving regional access to jobs and services.



STATEMENT 11: Identify and implement strategies to strengthen and increase resiliency among residents of the County.

The County will assess its risk and vulnerability to both natural and man-made hazards. It will evaluate its resiliency with respect to the six Colorado Resiliency Framework Sectors: Infrastructure, Watersheds and Natural Resources, Housing, Health and Social Services, Community, and Economy. Through the Hazard and Mitigation Plan, strategies will be developed to address vulnerabilities in these six sectors..

HOW THE POLICY FRAMEWORK INFORMS GOALS AND STRATEGIES

While the Policy Framework describes the objectives needed to move towards the Vision, this Master Plan must consider a wide variety of elements such as housing, transportation, land use; each of which have specific issues, concerns and challenges that future policy should reflect.

To help make sure that County policies that guide these various plan elements are aligned with the Policy Framework and Vision, the Master Plan provides a series of specific goals and strategies. A goal is best described as the “What is to be accomplished” for any specific plan element. For example, a goal for housing might be to “Provide Affordable Housing within the County”. A strategy provides a set of actions that the County can take to help achieve the goal. For example, a strategy related to providing affordable housing might be to provide access to county lands for affordable housing projects. As the graphic below suggests, the Policy Framework is connected to the goals. The strategies map out important steps that the County can take to support those goals.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 articulate important goals and strategies that relate to critical plan elements such as economic development, transportation, housing, future land use, etc. These goals and strategies are connected back to the Policy Framework to assure that all the plan elements are addressed in ways that support the Vision. In each Chapter is section entitled “Supporting the Vision” that describes how the specific goals and strategies relate back to the Policy Framework and ultimately to the Vision for Clear Creek County.

Policy Framework

- Critical Planning Objectives

