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## **Arapahoe County adopts 2015 budget**

*Commissioners approve \$339.3 million budget that holds the line on spending, protects essential services and the County's Service First commitment to citizens*

LITTLETON, CO --- On Dec. 9, the Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners unanimously adopted a \$339.3 million budget for 2015 that reflects the County's commitment to its Align Arapahoe strategic goals of Fiscal Responsibility, Service First and Quality Life.

"The 2015 budget was balanced with a focus on public safety and meeting the critical needs in the County, while also providing the essential County services at the quality our citizens have come to expect," said Commissioner Nancy A. Doty, who serves as Board Chair. "This was accomplished by holding the line on expenses, reducing department and elected office budgets to balance the budget and implementing efficiency measures throughout the County."

The 2015 budget sets aside \$8.7 million for capital projects, of which, \$4.2 million is dedicated for facility and technology improvements and \$3.2 million is included in the budget for the construction of the Arapahoe Road and I-25 interchange.

Other capital improvement projects include upgrading radio and communication equipment in the Sheriff's Office, renovating the County's Altura Plaza building that serves Aurora residents, investing in technology to ensure Arapahoe County is prepared for emergencies and disasters and resurfacing the aging parking deck at the Administration Building.

The 2015 budget adds a net increase of 23.5 positions, some of which include an additional building inspector to address the increase in construction activity; nine new staff to address growing caseloads in Human Services, a utility worker; and five school resource officers, three investigators and two K9 handlers for the Sheriff's Office.

As adopted, the budget includes funding for 2,011 employees and also funds a 2.25 percent salary adjustment based on merit.

Key to the County's financial sustainability is its structurally balanced General Fund Operating Budget. Arapahoe County balances its operating budget by not budgeting beyond means to pay for ongoing expenses, and by not relying on fund balances to operate County programs and services. Instead, fund balances are used to pay for one-time items, such as capital projects, equipment and other capital assets or needs.

The budget also meets the tenets of Align Arapahoe, the County's performance framework, which was implemented in 2009, and is helping Arapahoe County evaluate its core services and programs to ensure optimal performance at minimal costs. By using performance measures and feedback to monitor progress, Align Arapahoe is helping Arapahoe County to make better program, service and budget decisions.

While revenue growth in some areas has improved, particularly revenue from auto sales and construction, property tax growth is less than anticipated and is expected to remain flat for at least another year. The County's total revenue of \$334.4 million is a 1.5 percent increase from 2014.

The mill levy for 2015 will be 15.950 mills, which falls within TABOR constitutional revenue limitations, and continues to remain one of the lowest county mill levies in the Denver Metro area.

A copy of the County's budget is available for review under County News and under the Finance Department page at [www.arapahoegov.com](http://www.arapahoegov.com).

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