

2025-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN



CITY OF
THORNTON



City of Thornton - Strategic Plan

On October 14, 2025 City Council adopted the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, which provides guidance on advancing high-priority initiatives of City Council over the next five years. The 2025-2029 Strategic Plan is organized around four Strategic Focus Areas:

-  1. Vibrant and Purposeful Development
-  2. Connected Communities
-  3. Safe, Supported, and Livable Community
-  4. Organizational Excellence

Each of the Strategic Focus Areas are further defined by goals and actions, along with outcome measures to evaluate progress, with each action being led by an implementation team. Regular updates to City Council occur throughout the year and the Strategic Plan will be updated annually.

Scope & Structure of the Strategic Plan

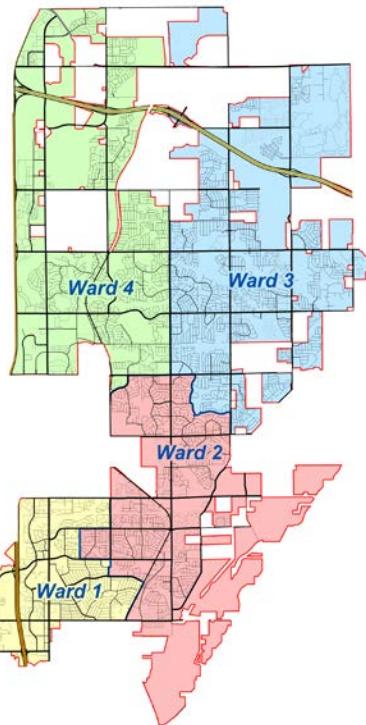


Adopted October 14, 2025

City Council



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WHAT DRIVES US



Mission

Our mission is to build a resilient and thriving Thornton by providing vital services that support safety and well-being for our community.



Vision

As one of the largest cities in Colorado, Thornton is a regional leader with a dynamic economy and safe, welcoming, and diverse neighborhoods focused on innovation, fiscal responsibility, and service excellence that enriches lives.



Values

We earn and value our community's **TRUST**

We value the **TRUST** our community has in us to serve as stewards of resources to provide essential services. We make decisions in a selfless and professional way that prioritize the collective, evolving, and long-term needs of the organization and community. We build systems of communication and transparency that reinforce accountability for our performance and actions.

Our internal and external **COLLABORATION** builds strong relationships and better outcomes

We demonstrate **COLLABORATION** by recognizing that the needs of our community and our work extend beyond the borders of our departments and our organization. We engage internal and external partners to align our efforts and achieve common goals. By working together, we capitalize on new opportunities and identify creative solutions to problems.

We demonstrate our **DEDICATION** to public service

We serve with **DEDICATION** by treating the public and our teammates with respect and compassion. We incorporate these values and practices into our work, recognizing that respect must be earned and maintained. We realize that our actions are a reflection on the City and we commit to listening to and supporting the community.

We continuously seek service **EXCELLENCE** through creativity and continuous improvement

We each take the initiative to pursue **EXCELLENCE** by increasing efficiency, improving service, creatively addressing problems, and adapting to new opportunities and challenges in our work. We serve with a mindset to continuously improve our processes and raise our standards.





Vibrant and Purposeful Development

Actively pursue mixed-use and walkable development and redevelopment that include diverse housing choices.

Attract commercial development with appealing amenities and economic opportunities that offer destinations for the community and visitors. Maintain inviting public spaces and facilities to inspire community pride and enjoyment.

Strategic Focus Area Goals

Goal: Enhance Thornton's identity by building on existing assets, revitalizing areas in decline and attracting new opportunities.

Goal: Plan for the future buildout of Thornton to include goals for annexation and growth, targeted areas/industries for the City and the fiscal impacts of land uses.

Goal: Further evaluate housing products and city processes to provide an attractive mix of residential product types.

Goal: Identify opportunities in the development review process to encourage developers to include amenities such as more public plazas, art or improved landscaping and infrastructure.

Goal: Create a framework for future parks, open spaces, public facilities and trail construction to enhance all types of development.

Outcome Measures for success:

1. Community Survey Questions
 - a. How satisfied are you with the balance of land uses (residential, commercial, employment centers) being pursued in Thornton?
 - b. How satisfied are you with the availability and accessibility of parks, open spaces, and cultural amenities in Thornton?
2. Jobs to Housing Ratio
3. Housing Cost Burden Percent (own/rent)
4. Trust for Public Land Park Score





Connected Communities

Reduce traffic congestion and enhance safe multi-modal transportation options, including transit, cycling, and pedestrian pathways, to support active lifestyles, build inclusive communities, and expand meaningful connections between neighborhoods, activity centers, and the region.

Strategic Focus Area Goals

Goal: The transportation system provides safe connections for movement throughout the City.

Goal: Movement to destinations throughout the city is reliable, easy to use, timely, and accessible for all.

Outcome Measures for success:

1. Community Survey Questions
 - a. How safe do you feel when walking, biking, or driving in Thornton?
 - b. How satisfied are you with the reliability and timeliness of traveling across Thornton using different modes (car, transit, biking, walking)?
2. Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) Accidents per Capita
3. Trail/Bike Lane Miles per Capita
4. Transit Coverage





Safe, Supported and Livable Community



Build a safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable community through exceptional and well-prepared neighborhood and public safety services, meaningful collaboration with social service partners, engaging community programs, and outstanding utilities.

Strategic Focus Area Goals

Goal: Foster an engaged and informed community to increase awareness of programs, services and resources that build community pride and ownership.

Goal: Cultivate a welcoming, inclusive, and thriving City of Thornton where all residents have access to diverse resources that meet their individual needs, improve their quality of life, and foster a strong sense of belonging.

Goal: Build trust and improve both real and perceived community security and safety to effectively serve every neighborhood in the City of Thornton.

Goal: Provide the community with an efficient, resilient, and sustainable utility and public works system that positions us to adapt to evolving needs.

Outcome Measures for success:

1. Community Survey Questions

- a. How satisfied are you with your ability to access recreational programs, City facilities, and events regardless of barriers (financial, geographic, or physical)?
- b. How safe do you feel in your neighborhood during the day and at night?
- b. How satisfied are you with the reliability and quality of Thornton's water, wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste services?

2. Crime Rate – Part 1 Crimes

3. Fires per Capita

4. Response Times (Police, Fire, and EMS)

5. Water Quality Complaints per Capita





Organizational Excellence



Foster a culture of accountability and continuous improvement that leverages technology, innovation, a focus on customer service, and intentional community engagement to respond to the evolving needs of the community.

Strategic Focus Area Goals

Goal: Prioritize and cultivate a culture of exemplary customer service, collaboration, belonging, and recognition.

Goal: Foster a practice of recruiting, developing, equipping, and retaining an effective and professional workforce.

Goal: Bolster data-driven decision making and technology integration to improve organizational effectiveness.

Goal: Align financial planning with long-term asset, resource, and service needs in a sustainable way.

Goal: Optimize communication and engagement across the organization, community, and regional partners.

Outcome Measures for success:

1. Community Survey Questions
 - a. How satisfied are you with the customer service you receive when interacting with City staff?
 - b. How satisfied are you with the City's communication about important initiatives, services, and decisions?
2. Employee Survey
3. Turnover Rate
4. General Fund Expenditures per Capita



The 2025-2029 Strategic Plan consists of four Focus Areas, each with sets of actions to be completed by Thornton staff. Below is the complete list of actions for each Focus Area.

Vibrant and Purposeful Development



Goal: Enhance Thornton's identity by building on existing assets, revitalizing areas in decline and attracting new opportunities.

- Create a strategic redevelopment plan to identify key infill sites (including zoning) and establish criteria to improve aesthetics in aging corridors including areas of infrastructure decline and financial tools.
- Evaluate the utilization of city owned property to determine future development potential including redevelopment of the Thornton Shopping Center.
- Identify existing and potential new districts in the City and develop a plan to bring district recommendations to Council.
- Develop programs to enhance recruitment, retention and expansion of local/boutique businesses to include opportunities for urban prototyping and local artisans/makers.
- Develop a feasibility plan to explore opportunities for multiple future community gathering spaces, hubs and/or a downtown that incorporate or encourage multimodal transportation connectivity.

Goal: Plan for the future buildout of Thornton to include goals for annexation and growth, targeted areas/industries for the City and the fiscal impacts of land uses.

- Review the City's comprehensive plan and Station Area Master Plans (STAMP) to include modernizing the vision, opportunities for increased density and a strong community engagement plan.

- Analyze opportunities for future corporate employment developments to sustain a diverse employment base.
- Assess and update the fiscal impact model to better reflect current tax policies and impacts of different land uses.
- Assess the development review process and identify potential process improvements (Ex. technology).

Goal: Further evaluate housing products and city processes to provide an attractive mix of residential product types.

- Develop an education campaign for the community on the needs and benefits of diverse housing choices.
- Develop a targeted residential development review Rapid Response Team including both internal and external partners.
- Identify priority areas using criteria (ex: density, transit, innovation) for attainable housing and engage the community to partner on buy-in.

Goal: Identify opportunities in the development review process to encourage developers to include amenities such as more public plazas, art or improved landscaping and infrastructure.

- Develop a strategy, including potential tools to attract projects that include public amenities or unique gathering spaces, (ex: reduce fees, utilize special revenue funds, or shorten development review times)
- Explore opportunities with the private sector for mutually advantageous amenities and/or infrastructure. (Ex: Broomfield's Brandywine South park at 124th and Lowell).
- Analyze and refine the process for inclusion of arts and culture in private sector projects.
- Identify barriers and potential opportunities to enhance large buildings and lots through murals or other mediums.

Goal: Create a framework for future parks, open spaces, public facilities and trail construction to enhance all types of development.

- Explore private sector opportunities to increase connectivity and pedestrian access to housing, businesses, schools and amenities.
- Complete and align the parks and open space master plan with the comprehensive plan.
- Assess future needs for public facilities, art, cultural amenities, parks and trails to plan for City full build-out.

Connected Communities

Goal: The transportation system provides safe connections for movement throughout the City.



- Develop and implement a communications plan to support the Vision Zero Action Plan, including prioritizing initiatives and evaluating options for grant funding.
- Identify barriers and safety issues to using public transportation, facilities, and amenities.
- Identify and prioritize key corridors for operational improvements to maximize user safety.
- Establish a cross departmental review to identify and prioritize opportunities for bike and pedestrian safety improvements.

Goal: Movement to destinations throughout the city is reliable, easy to use, timely, and accessible for all.

- Explore funding options, including partnerships with third parties, for implementation of the Transportation and Mobility Master Plan and Transit Plan.
- Determine a reliable option for real-time notification of major traffic incidents to adjust local signal timing on key corridors.
- Develop a plan to provide easier multimodal connections to key destinations and regional trails.
- Explore opportunities with third party mapping platforms to accurately show trails and connections.

- Determine a strategy to preserve land for future mobility hubs, transit stations, and key trail connections.

Goal: Connections provide unique and enjoyable experiences that engage our senses and bring people together

- Recommend programming to support multimodal transportation to major city events.
- Explore opportunities for adding or enhancing gathering spaces along bike trails to enhance the user experience.
- Evaluate and improve wayfinding to make trail system easier to navigate and use.
- Explore options for third party applications that encourage exploration of cultural, social, and historical amenities.

Safe, Supported, and Livable Community



Goal: Foster an engaged and informed community to increase awareness of programs, services and resources that build community pride and ownership.

- Evaluate and review existing community support and volunteerism opportunities. Develop strategies to provide volunteer opportunities and resources to the community.
- Develop a plan to expand public awareness and engagement to improve overall community resiliency, preparedness, and support.

Goal: Cultivate a welcoming, inclusive, and thriving City of Thornton where all residents have access to diverse resources that meet their individual needs, improve their quality of life, and foster a strong sense of belonging.

- Evaluate the current state of food security in the City.
- Complete a comprehensive review of homelessness initiatives and develop a strategic plan to support the homeless population in the City.



- Evaluate accessibility to recreational programming and City facilities. Develop an implementation plan to balance programming across the City and remove barriers to access to ensure all residents can utilize City resources.

- Evaluate the promotion of services, resources, and events and develop a plan to enhance community outreach.

Goal: Build trust and improve both real and perceived community security and safety to effectively serve every neighborhood in the City of Thornton.

- Develop a public safety technology plan.
- Evaluate and enhance public safety collaboration with neighborhood groups, the business community, and regional public safety agencies.
- Develop a public safety training strategy to include long-term feasibility of regional training partnerships.
- Evaluate cross-departmental collaboration to evaluate and expand alternative public safety response models.

- Develop a public safety facilities master plan.

Goal: Provide the community with an efficient, resilient, and sustainable utility and public works system that positions us to adapt to evolving needs.

- Evaluate how integrating the management of all water sources (including drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and recycled water) would enhance Thornton utilities and customer support.
- Develop an implementation strategy based on the recommendations from the Environmental Sustainability Master Plan.
- Evaluate existing utility services and determine opportunities to reduce or expand services.
- Review existing stormwater master plans, capital projects, and stormwater needs to develop an overall prioritization and strategy for the stormwater utility.

Organizational Excellence

Goal: Prioritize and cultivate a culture of exemplary customer service, collaboration, belonging, and recognition.



- Develop a customer service strategy to implement exemplary customer service to include focused trainings, tools, established protocols, and metrics that track the City's progress.
- Develop an employee engagement strategy to include communication, recognition, and employee feedback that connects employees to purpose and provides direction for continuous improvement.
- Assess organization for gaps and opportunities for cross-departmental committees and workplans (examples to include: capital planning, technology, fleet and building maintenance).

Goal: Foster a practice of recruiting, developing, equipping, and retaining an effective and professional workforce.

- Evaluate current hiring practices and job descriptions and develop changes with the goal of streamlining hiring, eliminating barriers, and defining clear career ladders.
- Develop implementation plan to bolster interest in careers in local government and create a pipeline of potential candidate pools.
- Develop training plan for supervisors to successfully support employee development to support a high-performing culture.

Goal: Bolster data-driven decision making and technology integration to improve organizational effectiveness.

- Explore feasibility to leverage AI and other smart city strategies into city operations and services.
- Conduct citywide audit of existing software systems and tools to assess utilization, optimize data collection and storage, identify overlaps or underutilized capabilities with the goal of streamlining systems and integrating separate platforms as its warranted.





- Develop a performance measurement program directly linked to strategic goals and agreed upon departmental levels of service.
- Assess organizational plans and processes to determine gaps in alignment between those plans and processes and the adopted mission, vision, values, and strategic plan.

Goal: Align financial planning with long-term asset, resource, and service needs in a sustainable way.

- Develop a comprehensive plan to model deferred maintenance and replacement costs, and to ensure proposed capital expansion projects and master plans consider affordability based on one-time capital and ongoing operational costs, and that these considerations are coordinated with the financial forecasts.
- Develop a program to periodically review current, new, or expanded revenue streams
- Develop a list of services provided by each department describing performance measurement data, tie to the strategic plan, and net costs.

- Explore feasibility of an incentive/recognition program for employee-submitted ideas that innovate and improve service delivery or reduce long-term costs
- Develop strategy to create understandable, easy to access, and up-to-date financial information and long-term financial modeling

Goal: Optimize communication and engagement across the organization, community, and regional partners.

- Develop plan to strengthen and streamline the City's internal and external communication, with an intent to prioritize reaching all community members, especially those currently missed, and include a clear way to act on their feedback.
- Revisit city-wide stakeholder survey with the intent to review line of questioning, timing, and how the survey is utilized after conducted.
- Explore current and potential regional participation efforts with all City departments and develop plan to purposefully engage.

