

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

# DENVER CITYWIDE GOALS



In 2024, Denver turned bold goals into progress. **We delivered the largest one-year reduction in street homelessness in recorded history, achieved a sharp drop in shootings and ignited a new era of downtown revitalization** — all laying the groundwork for an even brighter future for our city.

**Mayor Mike Johnston** put forth ambitious goals in 2024 to improve the lives of Denverites. City agencies, external partners and countless others across the city worked together to reach these goals. This report summarizes the results, and shows Denver made significant strides in reducing crime, improving affordability, addressing homelessness, streamlining permitting processes and bolstering employee engagement. While there is more work to do, our momentum is strong, and we look forward to applying the invaluable lessons learned here to future endeavors.

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Dear Friends,

**In Denver, we believe our hometown can be the best, most vibrant city in America.**

That's why in 2024 we set ambitious goals to address some of the biggest challenges that face our community. The success we achieved was remarkable.

We launched historic investments in our downtown and expanded affordable housing options citywide. We created new career prospects for students and saw crime rates drop across the city. We welcomed new businesses and expanded economic opportunities to revitalize neighborhoods and benefit Denverites for decades to come.

These achievements represent real change in people's lives and our neighborhoods. So when we set out new goals, they must serve as a guide — not a limit — for our efforts. For instance, a key goal for the previous year was to help move 2,000 people out of street homelessness. Reaching that milestone was important, not as an end in itself, but as a stepping stone toward a day when none of our neighbors have to live on the streets. In 2025, we will build on these successes and raise our sights even higher.

None of our accomplishments would have been possible without our exceptional city employees and community partners. Their creativity and determination turned our goals into reality. Whether that meant developing new housing solutions, streamlining government services, or making our downtown more welcoming and accessible — their dedication shows what Denver can achieve when we work together.

The attached report details our progress in 2024, but more importantly it lays the foundation for the work ahead. In 2025, we will build on this momentum with expanded investments in affordable housing, enhanced public safety programs, continued downtown revitalization, and so much more.

All of these efforts reflect our fundamental belief that the challenges we face are solvable, and that together we can be the ones who solve them. I'm grateful for your partnership in this work and excited for what we'll continue to achieve together.



Mike Johnston  
**Mayor**



“

*Our toughest problems are solvable, and we are the ones to solve them.*

Mayor Mike Johnston

2024



Largest recorded drop in unsheltered homelessness in Denver's history



Firearm homicides down by 29%



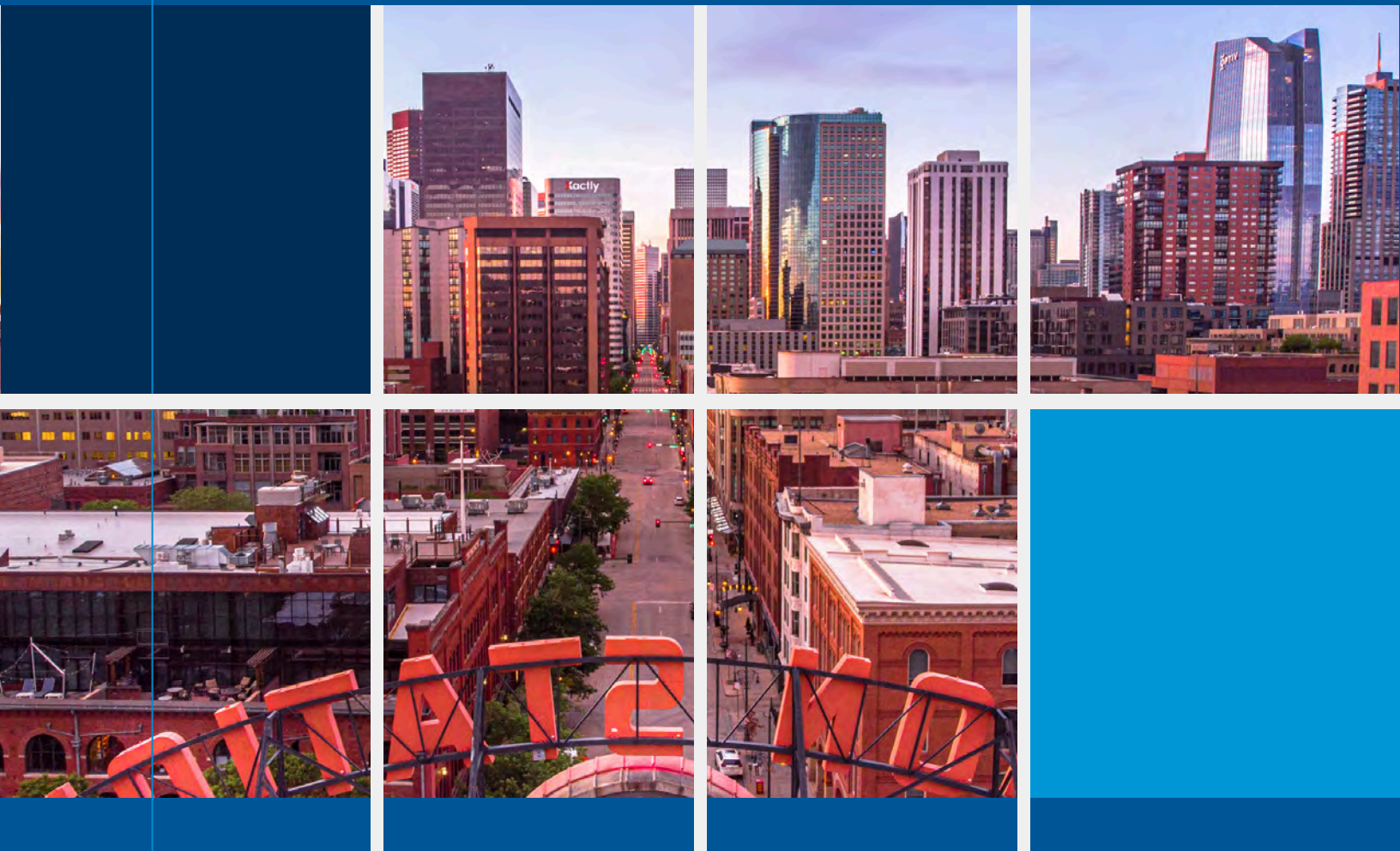
A new vision to invest an unprecedented \$570 million into our downtown



Residential permit wait times decreased 37%

# VIBRANT DENVER

In 2024, we worked to engage residents across Denver's 11 council districts to envision vibrant neighborhoods and a revitalized downtown, with a goal of identifying funding to bring these visions to life by the end of the year. This effort has already led to significant milestones in shaping Denver's future.



# VIBRANT DENVER

Our unique neighborhoods and downtown are the heart of Denver's culture and community. We focused this year on increasing support for more businesses and restaurants, while helping to deliver the most vibrant downtown in America. Mayor Johnston led the Denver Downtown Development Authority (DDA) expansion –



**VOTER-APPROVED  
PLAN WILL INVEST  
AN UNPRECEDENTED  
\$570M INTO  
DENVER'S FUTURE**

an investment of more than \$570 million into downtown, which voters overwhelmingly approved. More than 2,200 residents shared their vision and helped

craft the City Council-approved Plan of Development, focusing on investments that will create more housing options, enhance parks and public spaces and attract unique businesses to make downtown a thriving destination for living, shopping and working. The Mayor's Office also hosted a series of four community conversations in every council district to hear directly from residents and implement projects that are key to neighborhood success.

## GOAL

Engage the public across the 11 council districts to envision vibrant neighborhoods and a vibrant downtown, identifying funding for both

## OUTCOME

**77% of voters approved the continuation of the Denver Downtown Development Authority, investing \$570 million into downtown**

*Celebrating renovated blocks of 16th Street*



*DDA border map*

Following years of frustration brought on by the aftermath of the pandemic, as well as ongoing construction, Downtown Denver is opening back up for business and looking better than ever. Blocks are reopening on 16th Street, foot traffic has increased, revenues for small businesses have gone up and more businesses are looking to lease downtown. The DDA investment of more than \$570 million will be a catalyst for a vibrant downtown and additional expansion in new housing options, enhanced public spaces, support for local entrepreneurs and the attraction of world-class businesses.



# VIBRANT DENVER

Announcing a plan for the Denver Downtown Development Authority  
**May 9, 2024**



# AFFORDABLE DENVER

## **ALL IN MILE HIGH**

Reach a total of 2,000 people moved indoors from unsheltered homelessness

## **AFFORDABLE HOMES**

Permit, secure, finance or support the development and preservation of 3,000 long-term affordable housing units

Denver should be a place where each of us can afford to live, work and raise our family. Yet housing remains short on supply, and costs are too high.



# ALL IN MILE HIGH

Every Denverite deserves a safe place to sleep, and business owners and residents should be able to freely access sidewalks and open spaces without concern. The Johnston Administration's All in Mile High (AIMH) initiative reshaped Denver's homelessness response and surpassed its goal by bringing 2,233 people off the street and into housing since the initiative

## GOAL

Reach a total of 2,000 people moved indoors from unsheltered homelessness by end of 2024

## OUTCOME

**2,233 people moved indoors**

began. The city's innovative Housing Command Center also launched this year, which coordinates service provider efforts and connects residents with permanent housing at a centralized in-person resource

center. This new program has doubled permanent housing placements for participants, making AIMH more effective and impactful than ever.

**850+**

PEOPLE MOVED TO PERMANENT HOUSING

**-45%**

DROP IN 911 & 311 CALLS RELATED TO ENCAMPMENTS

**350+**

BLOCKS PERMANENTLY CLOSED TO ENCAMPMENTS

“

*The transformation in downtown is palpable, the transformation in the lives of those individuals who are no longer sleeping in tents... gives us hope.*

The Denver Post Editorial Board



AIMH has had a transformative impact on the City of Denver, including the largest reduction in street homelessness on record and an 83% reduction in family street homelessness. The city resolved 18 of Denver's largest encampments and permanently closed more than 350 blocks to future camping, bringing new life to essential public spaces. And safety increased, with 311, 911 and non-emergency calls related to encampments decreasing by 45%. Additionally, Denver ended the cycle of street homelessness for veterans in this city in 2024. Every veteran who is ready to come inside now can. We will build on this remarkable progress in pursuit of our goal of ending all street homelessness in Denver, and we look forward to helping thousands more get into safe, stable housing.

# AFFORDABLE HOMES

The price of housing is a major concern for most Denverites, and the Affordable Homes goal is the first step to ensuring the people who love, serve and work in Denver can afford to stay here for generations. By working across departments to break down barriers, opening new housing resources and working closely with builders, we've supported more than 3,000 units of housing that is actually affordable to working Denverites. These efforts have laid the groundwork to build a Denver that is truly affordable to all.



22

NUMBER OF  
PROJECTED UNITS  
OVER GOAL

## GOAL

Permit, secure, finance or support the development and preservation of 3,000 long-term affordable units

## OUTCOME

3,022 affordable units



*The 29th and Welton project is a representative example of how working collaboratively and cooperatively with jurisdictions, associated entities and developers can bring about affordable housing projects.*

Debra Johnson,  
RTD General Manager & CEO

As housing prices continue to skyrocket in Denver, it is critical that we reduce costs for working families. By creating, preserving and supporting more than 3,000 housing opportunities, thousands of teachers, nurses, retail workers, firefighters, seniors and their families have the opportunity to stay in Denver and thrive. These state-of-the-art facilities are indistinguishable from market rate properties and fit seamlessly into surrounding neighborhoods and communities.

Housing that is genuinely affordable builds stronger, more diverse neighborhoods and weaves communities together. With Denver facing a shortage of nearly 45,000 affordable housing units in the next 10 years, we will continue to drive this work forward by collaborating with partners and the community to deliver innovative housing solutions.

# SAFE DENVER

## SAFE CITY

Reduce violent gun crime citywide by 20% and improve customer satisfaction by 15%

## ROADS TO RECOVERY

Move 200 individuals struggling with addiction or mental health out of the criminal justice system and into a coordinated intervention, treatment and rehabilitation pipeline by the end of 2024

Every Denverite deserves to feel safe and secure in their community. The Safe Denver goals improve public safety by reducing violent gun crime, improving resident experiences and preventing crime by helping people get access to treatment and care.



# SAFE CITY

## GOAL

Reduce violent gun crime citywide by 20% and improve customer satisfaction by 15%

## OUTCOME

Persons shot: -23%

Customer satisfaction: +15%



Community meeting to discuss safety goals in southwest Denver

Every Denverite deserves to feel safe and secure in their community, which is why the city set ambitious Safe City goals to reduce citywide violent gun crime by 20% and improve customer satisfaction with public safety services by 15%.

The number of people wounded in shootings fell by double digits, and the number of homicides with firearms fell by nearly 30%. These efforts are making a true difference for both residents and businesses.



*In the past year, this neighborhood is a lot calmer. I like the change.*

Armida G.,  
Resident near Place Network investigation (PNI) site at South Raritan Street & West Mississippi Avenue. PNI is one of the violence reduction strategies used in Denver and nationwide to target hotspots and make long-term dents in violence and crime rates.

## YTD CHANGES: 2023 TO 2024

FIREARM HOMICIDES

PERSONS SHOT

NON-FATAL SHOOTINGS

-29%

-23%

-22%

# SAFE CITY

Our strategy to address shootings focuses on a holistic approach to reducing crime. This includes innovative public safety initiatives such as the Hot Streets patrols, which enhanced Denver Police Department presence in high-risk areas, preventing crime before it occurs and leading to an 85% reduction in violence in those neighborhoods. Additionally, our Trust Patrols facilitated over 1,111 interactions with law enforcement, as officers engaged with local businesses and community centers to strengthen relationships within the community.

Not only did our public safety team reduce crime citywide, but citizen satisfaction with police encounters grew by 15% with 89% of residents reporting positive interactions.

The city will continue to build on proven strategies to reduce gun crime while also implementing new methods, as we work toward making Denver safer for all.



“  
...Working with the team, I've seen a change. They (DPD's PNI team in District 1) put a lot of work and man hours. Recently, I've seen a change in landscaping and lighting, for it to work it is a community effort.

Dean S.,  
Resident near Paco  
Sanchez Park PNI site



*Before, broken and boarded windows at Shepe's Bar. After, plywood down and repairs made.*

Beyond the obvious public safety benefits of residents living healthier lives, safer streets mean peace of mind, improved quality of life and more opportunities to enjoy Denver. For businesses, a decrease in violence fosters economic growth, attracting customers and investments while creating vibrant commercial areas. Collectively, these achievements strengthen Denver as a place where families, workers and entrepreneurs can thrive, building a resilient community prepared for a brighter future.

# ROADS TO RECOVERY

While the All In Mile High initiative is an effective solution for many, some individuals need additional assistance to find success. This is especially true for individuals battling addiction and mental health issues. To address this, the city launched Roads to Recovery (R2R) – an innovative new program that connects residents with treatment, case management and long-term supportive services. Through this program, the city connected with more than 400 chronically homeless individuals and directly matched more than 200 people with mental health and recovery resources.



*Oliver said he had been in and out of homelessness for years. He had slept outside too often. He was cold. He struggled with drugs. And he was ready for a change.*

*“ I wasn’t expecting this today. But I’m happy. I’m going to do some sober living for a couple weeks, get back on my feet, get my priorities straight.*

Reporting and photo via Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite

## GOAL

Move 200 individuals struggling with addiction or mental health out of the criminal justice system and into a coordinated intervention, treatment and rehabilitation pipeline by the end of 2024

## OUTCOME

**201 individuals who were chronically homeless moved into treatment**

**445**

**INITIAL CLIENT ASSESSMENTS**

**359**

**CLIENTS CONNECTED TO A CASE MANAGER**

**201**

**CLIENTS CONNECTED TO SERVICES**

Roads to Recovery has demonstrated the potential to transform lives, reduce reoffending and enhance public safety. By addressing the root causes of behavioral health challenges and bridging gaps in care, the program not only benefits participants but also strengthens neighborhoods by helping low-level offenders get off the streets and back on their feet.



# GREAT GOVERNMENT

## IMPROVE CITY SERVICES

Reduce our response time by 20% to the top three constituent concerns

## CUT PERMITTING TIME FOR NEW & CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Re-envision the development permitting process and reduce city review time by 30%

Delivering high-quality services for residents is always our top priority. Through this goal, we are re-envisioning the permitting process and delivering more efficient and effective services to residents.

# IMPROVE CITY SERVICES

Government has a reputation of moving too slowly and making people jump through too many hurdles to get simple things done – so this year, we focused on improving the city services that Denverites use the most. While we continue to create long-term fixes to simplify our internal systems, we are implementing common sense solutions like public dashboards to track business licenses, so applicants can get information fast, as well as data analysis to streamline trash collection routes and ensure residents receive trash, recycling and compost carts quicker. These measures have delivered better public services to residents.



Our new public-facing licensing dashboards offer a one-stop shop for residents, quickly providing estimated processing times and application status updates. As a result, 311 now resolves nearly 95% of licensing questions on the first call, saving over 4,000 customer hours. These two new dashboards have received over 55,000 visits in 13 months, improving transparency in business regulation.

## GOAL

Reduce our response times by 20% to the top three constituent concerns:

- Reduce businesses' application status requests
- Solid waste cart delivery
- Improve solid waste route completion to 93%

## OUTCOME

**Application status requests: -20%**

**Solid waste cart delivery times: -31%**

**Route completion: Averaged 90%**

Also this year, we announced upcoming changes to better the city. Recycling services will be greener and more cost-effective to better align with residents' needs. And we're fast-tracking compost bins for every Denver resident. Everyone who wants a bin gets one by the end of March 2025.

### Check our current application processing times

A screenshot of a web dashboard for Denver Excise &amp; Licenses. At the top, there's a link 'Check the status of a license application'. Below that, a text block explains that pending business and individual license applicants can check current application processing times. The main part of the dashboard shows a table with columns for 'LICENSE TYPE' and 'TRANSACTION TYPE'. A blue box highlights the 'Average Processing Time (in days)' as '24'. A note states: 'Applications for the selected License and Transaction Type currently process in an average of 24 days, from the day of submission to license issuance. Amount shown is the average processing time over the last 12 months.' There is also a note at the bottom: 'If your processing time exceeds the above, please check your email for any communications we may have sent you.'



# CUT PERMITTING TIME

Local government should never get in the way of innovation and opportunity, which is why Denver made a concerted effort to cut permitting times for anyone trying to build in our city. We worked across city departments to simplify the permitting process for home remodels, invested in express permitting for commercial tenants and made it easier to review site plans. [Breaking down silos within](#)

## GOAL

Re-envision the development permitting process and reduce city review time by 30%

## OUTCOME

**Residential permitting: -37%**

**Commercial permitting: -17%**

[the city and launching new online tools for applicants streamlined workflows to reduce permit review time by 37% for single-family homes and duplexes and by 17% for commercial projects.](#) We will continue to decrease

review times to make Denver an even better place to do business, and to deliver more housing even sooner.

Looking ahead, city agencies and Mayor Johnston's administration will continue working to improve city services by implementing artificial intelligence (AI) tools, like Community Planning and Development's [new review platform](#) that can further reduce permitting times.



*They have now revised the process in ways that make me, as a customer, feel heard. I'm excited to know City staff are truly listening and wanting to improve.*

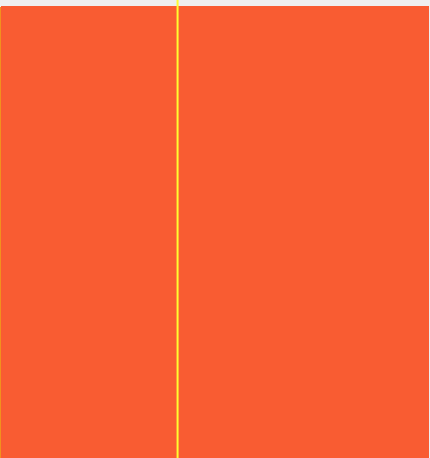
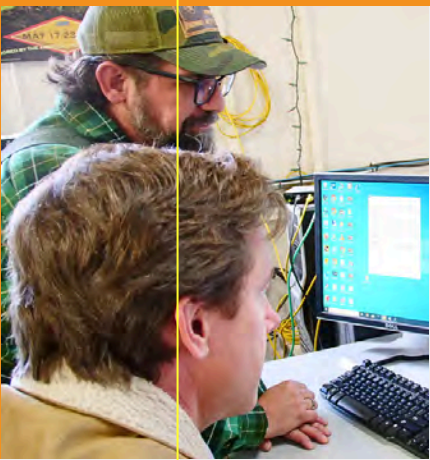
Technical Advisory Board Member



Denver residents deserve world-class services. By incorporating resident feedback and fostering cross-agency collaboration, the city has broken down silos, streamlined communication and reduced friction in city processes, like permitting and trash pickup. This year, Denver also launched new digital platforms to further improve our service delivery. Those include an online permitting dashboard, a new AI tool that will soon enhance the permitting process, the [Sunny chatbot](#) for 24/7 city resource information and the [My Friend Ben portal](#), which helps residents access local, state and federal benefits.

# EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

All goals are centered around supporting and working with the incredible employees across Denver



# EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT



## GOAL

Improve employee engagement by 5%

## OUTCOME

*Results expected late January*

The City and County of Denver's successes are built on the passion, dedication and care of its city employees, who work tirelessly for the benefit of Denver residents and visitors. Recognizing the critical role of its workforce, the city

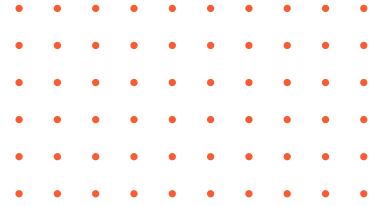
launched several new programs to increase employee engagement and satisfaction. That starts by going to the source and meeting with people on the job about how to transform processes and deliver better results. These programs, like Mayor Johnston's agency "ride-alongs" and small group breakfast and lunch conversations, give city employees more direct access to the Mayor to share new ideas about how to deliver on our shared goal of building a vibrant, safe and affordable Denver for all.



**4% MERIT INCREASE**  
**MEALS WITH THE MAYOR**

**NEW WELLNESS DAY**  
**EMPLOYEE RIDE-ALONGS**

These initiatives reflect Denver's commitment to fostering a connected and engaged workforce, ensuring that employees feel valued and empowered as they continue to serve the city with excellence. For residents and businesses, this translates to a better experience when interacting with city services, from streamlined processes to enhanced productivity to more innovative, empathetic and efficient customer support.

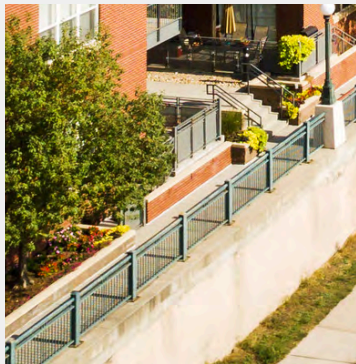
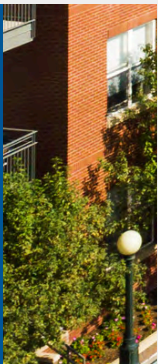
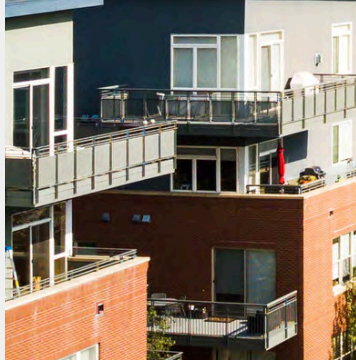
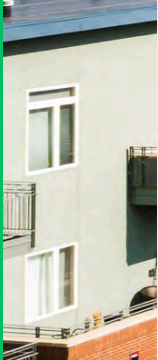
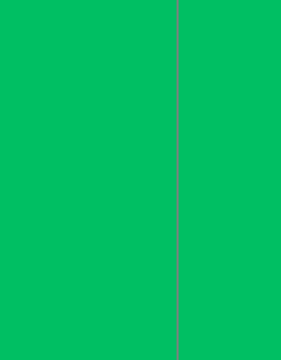


# SUMMARY

Achieving these goals and the progress established through this work in the past year showcases our ability to deliver on ambitious targets. Our collective successes were made possible by the teamwork and collaboration between the employees of the City and County of Denver, City Council, external partners and our residents.

Improved communication played a crucial role in achieving milestones by breaking down obstacles, and forming interdisciplinary teams that aligned and streamlined efforts across departments in order to meet shared goals. We will build on this momentum, embracing the lessons learned and the achievements already met as we continue to improve this city we know and love.





DenverGov.org/  
**2024Goals**



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY



**DENVER**  
MAYOR'S OFFICE