COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

EQUITY CARE INNOVATION INTEGRITY

President's Goals and Work Plan | 2025-2026

Context and Direction:

The 2025-2026 academic year marks a significant moment in Colorado Mountain College's Mountain Futures strategic plan. Originally envisioned as a seven-year roadmap (2023-2030), this year represents both the halfway point and the first year of the final five-year window leading us toward 2030. This moment provides an opportunity not only to reflect on what has been accomplished, but to lean with greater focus into the long-term work that remains.

Our work has remained tightly aligned to our four treasured and enduring commitments of Mountain Futures: **Equity, Innovation, Integrity, and Care**. These commitments are grounded in our identity and mission as both a proud **Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and a dual mission institution.** This identity uniquely positions CMC to expand access and success for all learners in our mountain communities, whether through the significant number of high school students engaged in concurrent enrollment, adult learners returning to education, or diverse students pursuing bridge programming, certificates, associate, and bachelor's degrees.

The goals outlined in this document are not simply for the next fiscal year but are designed to position the college for long-term organizational strength, culture, and student success over the next 3-5 years and beyond. Annual benchmarks will continue to ensure accountability. However, this plan is intentionally designed to keep the college aligned with its long-term vision: mission driven, nationally distinctive, and a financially sound institution that fully serves the people and communities of Colorado's central mountains.

Some initiatives naturally intersect multiple commitments. For consistency, they are listed under one category, though their impact extends across all four.

EQUITY

Equity: Advancing Social and Economic Mobility through Student Success

Colorado Mountain College holds a truly unique position within its region as a trusted, consistent, and deeply embedded in the communities we serve. In order for individuals to thrive in our mountain communities, their financial well-being must be an inextricable part of our equity mission. Social and economic mobility is both the outcome we seek for our students and the measure by which our work should be evaluated.

Research consistently confirms that economic connectedness, the degree to which individuals form relationships across income and social groups, is one of the strongest predictors of upward mobility in the United States. Among all institutional types, colleges rank highest as the places where these cross-class connections most frequently occur. In regions like ours, where socioeconomic divides can be particularly pronounced, this presents a distinct opportunity for CMC to fully leverage its unique role, creating intentional pathways for students to build the social capital that translates into long-term economic opportunity.

While CMC continues to achieve strong outcomes in student graduation growth and completion, our unique structure, regional presence, and program design position us to directly influence the long-term economic success of our graduates both through what we teach and through relationships we help students build along the way.

Goal:
Advance equity by tying student completion and success metrics directly to improved social and economic mobility among graduates.

Initiatives:

- Through a new cohort of Innovation Fellows, design academic models that intentionally integrate CMC's physical campuses into the student experience, creating opportunities for learners to connect, collaborate, and engage in person while benefiting from flexible instruction.

- Expand and refine efforts to clarify and grow college-ready pathways and certificates offered in Spanish for English Language Learners (ELLs), ensuring these opportunities are clearly communicated and accessible, and leveraging technology (including but not limited to AI) and innovative tools where appropriate.

- Evaluate accessibility of high-wage, high-demand programs, particularly whether enrollment reflects the diversity of the student population. Identify and begin to address institutional barriers where they exist.

- Expand the use of relevant and timely labor market data to assist students, faculty, and staff in academic and career planning.
- Prepare annual report on economic outcomes and career placement for graduates, assessing the degree of upward social and economic mobility CMC enables.

CARE

Care: Unifying the CMC Story and Culture

As the college has grown in both scope and ambition, the number of new initiatives, projects, and programs has expanded rapidly. Importantly, CMC continues to outperform peer institutions on key student success and operational outcomes. While all initiatives have delivered measurable results, they have also created a sense of fragmentation among employees who may struggle to see how their work connects to the larger vision.

While the work spans many areas, it is all part of the same overarching goal: improving the student experience and fulfilling our mission. Moving forward, it is critical to unify the CMC story providing clarity, alignment, and a shared sense of purpose across the organization. Strengthening this cultural clarity is essential both for employee morale and for sustaining long-term institutional success.

Goal:
Strengthen the college's internal communication by creating a unifying narrative that connects initiatives to the student experience and institutional mission.

Initiatives:
- Prepare a long-term plan to build 6–8 new apartment buildings (350–400 beds) across the district by 2035, aligned with CMC's housing philosophy.
- With College Council and the Board of Trustees, prepare the college for potential changes in state and federal investments (e.g., AELA, TRIO, Title IV, etc.), as well as potential shifts in tuition classification policies.
- Maintain regular internal communications with students, faculty, and staff about changes in policy and resources.
- Continue sharing the college's mission and contributions with local and national audiences, distinguishing CMC's contributions to local educational, workforce, and economic development.
- Advance progress on key institutional initiatives, including but not limited to MAPAS, Compass, AASHE STARS, digital accessibility, and technology implementations such as

Workday and Lumens, and improve internal communications to ensure their purpose, strategic alignment, and collective impact are clearly understood across the college.

- Collaborate with Faculty Senate to clarify workload expectations as the college transitions to a new academic calendar and course formats. Begin exploring multi-year faculty agreements (contracts).
- With leaders in academic affairs and Faculty Senate, raise awareness of and exposure to opportunities for all faculty to engage in service to the college, their campus, and/or their discipline. Where possible, develop new approaches to assist new faculty and those in skilled and applied disciplines in participating in service.
- Strengthen faculty professional development and community through the Office of Teaching & Learning (OTL), ensuring collegewide alignment in teaching and learning practices across modalities and campuses.
- With College Council, evaluate the relationships between centralized and campus-based services and make recommendations for clarifying roles/titles, responsibilities, reporting relationships, and college goals.
- Using a heavily data-informed strategy, develop intentional course and program plans that align with the college's new academic calendar and differentiate course design based on course type, pedagogical standards, campus norms, and student needs. This work will support CMC's broader goals of improving student completion, increasing scheduling predictability and transparency, enhancing faculty and advisor planning, and maintaining instructional quality across all modalities and disciplines.
- Ensure that the set of philosophies approved by leadership in 2024–25 , as well as any new philosophies developed, are broadly understood across the college and actively used to guide decision-making in housing, academic programs, student services, concurrent enrollment, and other key areas. This work will include developing communication and training tools, embedding philosophies into planning and budget processes, enhanced collaboration with key partners, and creating accountability measures so that expectations outlined in the philosophies consistently shape institutional practice.

INNOVATION

Innovation: Reimagining Learning through Flexibility and Human Connection

The voices of our students are clear: they value multiple modes of instruction, the flexibility to balance life and education, and meaningful opportunities to build personal and professional connections. Whether adult learners managing work and family responsibilities or traditional-age students seeking engagement across geographically dispersed communities, CMC must continually innovate to serve the full range of students.

Our unique regional structure, broad program offerings, and diverse student demographics require an intentional approach to designing learning that supports both academic flexibility and authentic human connection. This includes expanding meaningful applied and work-based learning experiences and simple but powerful moments of engagement that build students' networks and confidence.

At the same time, innovation at CMC extends beyond the classroom. Housing has become one of the most pressing challenges facing students and working families across our mountain communities. Lack of affordable housing threatens access to education, limits workforce participation, and directly impacts the college's ability to serve its mission. Our sustained investment in housing is an essential innovation that expands access, creates stability, and strengthens our ability to attract and retain both students and employees across our mountain communities.

Similarly, demand for skilled trades and technical workforce training cuts across all student demographics. Whether it is traditional-age students preparing for high-demand careers or adult learners seeking to reskill or advance, CMC's expansion of skilled trades programming reflects an innovative response to both student aspirations and regional workforce needs.

Goals:

- Scale course offerings and academic programs designed to balance flexibility with human connection.
- Expand workforce opportunities through housing investments and skilled trades programming that directly lead to "good jobs."

Initiatives:

- Through a new cohort of Innovation Fellows, develop recommendations for offering multiple academic programs as apprenticeships.
- Finalize and begin implementation of a districtwide plan to expand skilled trades programming, with a focus on increasing access and completion among adult learners and recent high school graduates, ensuring programs are aligned to regional workforce needs and provide full pathway options.
- Prioritize the development of meaningful partnerships with state and local organizations, governments, and employers to achieve the college's goals of expanded housing and skilled trades programming.
- With a goal of reaching more individuals with relevant and timely instruction, work with Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and Student Affairs to prepare opportunities to transition and scale certain academic programs into non-credit and continuing education formats.

- Through Innovation Fellows, evaluate the causes of and potential remedies for the recent decline in students' first-term success.

INTEGRITY

Integrity: Healthy Programs, Sustainable Resources, and Civic Participation

At its core, Colorado Mountain College is both an academic institution and a vital civic anchor for the diverse mountain communities it serves. The commitment to integrity requires the college to ensure that its academic programs remain both high-quality and financially sustainable but equally important, that CMC actively contributes to the health of civic life in our region.

On one hand, academic program health is central to sustaining the college's ability to invest in long-term goals. Rigorous and transparent program evaluation ensures that resources remain aligned with student and workforce needs, allowing the college to grow strategically while preserving academic excellence and fiscal responsibility.

At the same time, CMC has a unique opportunity and responsibility to serve as a convener of civic dialogue across our central mountain region. In an era marked by deepening polarization, the college is uniquely positioned to bring together diverse perspectives, foster nonpartisan engagement, and strengthen the civic knowledge and participation of both its students and the broader community. As the consistent and trusted institution across a widely dispersed region, CMC can provide neutral spaces for dialogue, education, and public engagement on critical democratic principles.

CMC's integrity rests on this dual foundation: maintaining strong, financially sound academic programs while also fulfilling its mission to serve as a beacon for civic participation and democratic engagement.

Goals:

- Ensure program health and financial sustainability across all academic and operational units.
- Establish the Center for Civics while advancing statewide Colorado 250/150 efforts.

Initiatives:

- With the President's Student Advisory Council, ensure routine student representation at Board of Trustees and College Council meetings.
- Update the Program Health Score and fully implement the college's program review procedure to ensure programs are aligned with demand and lead to good jobs.

- With Board of Trustees, evaluate and pursue a potential fall 2025 ballot measure to secure additional resources for housing and skilled trades program. Pursue all appropriate deadlines and finalize ballot language and strategy no later than September 4.
- Launch the Center for Civics to enhance student engagement both on campus and in the classroom, expand community-based civic learning opportunities, and explore the development of a civics endorsement for CMC diplomas.
- Propose state-level legislative strategies to support enrollments in Salida and in the Adult High School Diploma program.
- Finalize the planning, analysis, and documentation necessary for the Board of Trustees to evaluate the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing conservation easements at the Spring Valley and Glenwood Center campuses.
- Finalize plans to responsibly transition college-owned assets at Hayden Ranch and the Buena Vista site to more suitable and viable owners, ensuring alignment with CMC's long-term strategic and operational priorities.
- Achieve all Year Two milestones of the Workday Student implementation, including the successful launch of enrollment, financial aid, and registration systems. Where practicable, ensure that registration protocols for community education courses are simple, streamlined, and appropriate for populations seeking those courses.
- In collaboration with the Board of Trustees and local leaders, explore and respond with fidelity in stewardship to possible annexation communities, including but not limited to recent interests such as the Town of Hayden, ensuring alignment with CMC's District annexation philosophy

Ongoing Multi-Year Initiatives

These efforts are long-term, cross-functional, and foundational to *Mountain Futures*. They continue to evolve but are becoming part of CMC's institutional DNA.

- **Compass**
- **ASHE STARS**
- **Concurrent Enrollment Initiatives**
- **MAPAS**
- **Digital Accessibility**
- **Office of Teaching & Learning (OTL)**

Continuing Initiatives from 2024-2025

These initiatives were launched during the 2024–2025 cycle but have not yet reached full implementation or completion. As such, they remain in active development and require continued progress in the 2025–2026 academic year.

- Develop culturally competent and sustainable advising and support program for ASSET and DACAmented students, including training, content covering immigration and career topics, and opportunities for training and promotion among employees.
- Establish an inclusive mentoring program for all newly enrolled students and those entering internship and experiential opportunities, with a particular focus on helping first-generation students navigate the college and establish professional networks.
- Evaluate and implement new admissions processes for high-demand academic programs to ensure accessibility and representation among sub- populations of students, including lower income, first generation, multilingual, and male students.
- With representatives of the Faculty Senate, finalize the new procedures for the implementation of faculty workload policy, adopted by the Board of Trustees in June 2024.
- With faculty and college leaders, launch initiative to develop skills in civility, compromise, and empathy among the members of the CMC community, especially students.
- Develop a consistent and sustainable collegewide approach to intercollegiate athletics at the college, including expanded intramural, intercollegiate club, and/or varsity sports.
- Propose legislation to enable adult high school diploma students to access college courses in a manner consistent with existing concurrent enrollment programs laws.
- Considering demand for remote and online course modalities, explore best practices to improve student engagement and deliver effective student support services at scale.
- Transition CMC's Hayden Ranch property south of Leadville and the CMC properties located in Buena Vista into productive assets in those communities.

Completed Activities in 2024–2025 Plan

These initiatives have reached their key milestones or implementation benchmarks. While considered "complete" in the context of the 2024–2025 work plan, they remain part of the fabric of the college sustained through operations, policy, or programmatic structures. Their successful implementation represents meaningful progress and commitment, even if they are not articulated as distinct priorities in this year's strategic goals.

- Reach "year two" project deliverables and performance targets for the implementation of the Multilingual Academic Pathways, Advising & Success (MAPAS) Initiative to support ESL and HSE students into certificate and degree programs. Communicate the results of regional ESL and workforce needs across internal and external audiences.
- Institute broadly accessible and financially sustainable opportunities so that all students can fully participate in the college's study abroad and career exploration programs, including those with potential barriers related to their citizenship, work authorization, or disabilities.
- Strengthen the college's ties with the regional Latino communities with more relevant, intentional, and impactful outreach intended to increase engagement and meet them where they are.
- Establish LGBTQIA working committee to advise the president's office on improving inclusive programs and practices at the college.
- Ensure continued collegewide ADA compliance with new accessibility requirements under HB21-1110 for all digital, video, and online content, including instructional materials, Canvas, and student affairs systems. Meet the college's "90s Accessibility Challenge" targets.
- Continue to implement employee retention and profit sharing/performance compensation strategies.
- Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of faculty compensation, starting with adjunct instructors, and establish a working committee to recommend new adjunct tier promotion and pay procedures.
- Implement housing buy-down program to assist employees with purchasing market dwellings in return for deed restrictions.
- Establish new performance evaluation procedures for non-faculty employees that align with and utilize new technologies found in Workday.
- Successfully host community engagements across the college as part of the Rediscovering Common Ground/common reader series.
- Inaugurate standing "President's Student Leadership Council" to provide regular and ongoing advice to the executive offices.

- Evaluate the impact of college investments in internal professional development programs on employee retention, job satisfaction, and career advancement.
- Complete academic and student database integration into Workday using new pathways outlined by the NCii/Rural Pathways effort and the college's Compass initiatives and holistic advising practices
- Finalize recommendations regarding alternative length terms at CMC.
- Develop collegewide administrative and academic policies regarding AI; develop recommendations for the potential applications of AI in college operations.
- Develop collegewide philosophy on Early Childhood Education, including the appropriate use of college facilities and potential adjustments to college policies.
- Review and update the college's IT, academic, enrollment management, IR, foundation/marketing and capital plans to align with the Mountain Futures strategic plan.
- Retool the President's Advisory Council to improve engagement with volunteers, timely responses, and facilitate connections with leading thinkers.
- Analyze local workforce data to align academic programs and capital investments with good jobs in the local and regional markets. Establish consistent annual academic program review procedure to ensure the achievement of college and programmatic goals.
- In fulfillment of the college's Dual Mission designation, increase the number of embedded, stackable credentials across programs of study.
- With the Board of Trustees, revise policy on trustee membership and district apportionment, including the possible addition of at-large seats.
- Develop new procedures describing the college's philosophy regarding the potential expansion of the tax district.
- Finalize plans for the "Building 3" affordable housing project at the Vail Valley campus.
- Work with campus leaders and collegewide facilities teams to evaluate current utilization of and potential opportunities for campus sites located in communities in transition, including Dillon, Carbondale, and Rifle.
- Evaluate feasibility of additional affordable housing investments across the college district, including Leadville and Steamboat.
- Successfully petition the Colorado Department of Higher Education to provide supplemental funding to recognize Salida FTE per §23-71-301 CRS.
- Prepare plans to assist school district partners in designing equitable, consistent and academically beneficial pathways for CEPA students, including the routine sharing of participation data and research and embedding the Essential Skills pathway for high

school partners to promote cleaner and more consistent transfer pathways for students.

- Complete lease to purchase option for Kesner building in Salida; prepare plan for necessary renovations to the facility to address ADA compliance issues.
- Complete renovations to the automotive training center in Glenwood Springs and successfully launch the first automotive program in the RFSD in more than 20 years.
- Host a district-wide CEPA summit using the CEEI (Concurrent Enrollment Expansion and Innovation) grant from the Colorado Department of Education.
- To support the stability of the region's workforce and improve opportunities for students, both new and existing, host outreach events with consulates from countries representing much of the international workforce in CMC's tax district.
- Foster a more inclusive, collaborative environment by offering periodic feedback sessions with faculty through which they can openly discuss concerns, share ideas, and provide advice to the president's office on current and upcoming initiatives.
- Adapt to new state-level property tax laws and develop 2025-26 budget that aligns with college commitments to affordability and above-market compensation while developing a financial plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of college operations and the achievement of strategic goals.